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Financial reports and audited financial statements and reports of the Board of Auditors:

United Nations

Capital master plan

Implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its reports on the United Nations for the biennium ended 31 December 2009 and on the capital master plan for the year ended 31 December 2009

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides additional information in response to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors as contained in its report on the United Nations for the biennium ended 31 December 2009 and its report on the capital master plan for the year ended 31 December 2009. The report is submitted in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 48/216 B, in which the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at the same time as the Board of Auditors submitted its recommendations to the Assembly on measures taken or to be taken to implement those recommendations.

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The Administration has concurred with many of the Board's recommendations, and most of the comments of the Secretary-General have been duly reflected in the reports of the Board. Therefore, in an effort to reduce redundancy and streamline documentation, the present report provides additional comments from the Administration only where required, as well as information on the status of implementation, the office responsible, the estimated completion date and the priority for each recommendation contained in the reports of the Board of Auditors. In addition, the report contains updated information on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Board relating to prior periods that were reported by the Board as not having been fully implemented in the annexes to its reports.

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 48/216 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it on the measures that would be taken to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors at the same time as the reports of the Board were submitted to the Assembly. Accordingly, the present report is submitted in response to the recommendations of the Board contained in its report on the United Nations for the biennium ended 31 December 2009[1] and in its report on the capital master plan for the year ended 31 December 2009.[2]

2. In preparing the present report, account was taken of the provisions of the following General Assembly resolutions:

(a) Resolution 48/216 B, in particular paragraph 8, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to draw attention in his reports to the recommendations that would require action by the General Assembly;

(b) Resolution 52/212 B, in particular paragraphs 3 to 5, and the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the proposals of the Board for improving the implementation of its recommendations approved by the Assembly (A/52/753, annex);

(c) Resolution 62/223 A, in which the Assembly, in paragraph 11, reiterated its request for inclusion by the Secretary-General in future reports of information on the setting of time frames, the identification of office holders and priorities for implementation and, in paragraph 10, reiterated its request that the Secretary-General provide full explanation for delays in implementation of the recommendations of the Board for prior periods, in particular those recommendations not yet fully implemented that are two or more years old.

3. With regard to prioritization, it is noted that the Board categorizes the most important recommendations as "main" recommendations. While all accepted recommendations of the Board will be implemented in a timely manner, the main recommendations will be considered of the highest priority.

4. Given that the Administration has concurred with most of the Board's recommendations and that many of its comments have been duly reflected in the reports of the Board of Auditors, detailed comments are provided only where considered necessary for recommendations from the financial period ended 31 December 2009. However, in accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 62/223 A, additional information will be provided for all recommendations relating to prior periods that were considered by the Board not to have been fully implemented.

5. In accordance with the above-mentioned resolutions, section II of the present report contains the information requested by the General Assembly on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the reports of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations. Section II.A provides information on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board for its report for the biennium ended 31 December 2009, while section II.B provides information on the implementation of recommendations that the Board considered not fully implemented from its reports on the bienniums ended 31 December 2003, 2005 and 2007.

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[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 5* (A/65/5), vol. I, chap. II.

[2] Ibid., vol. V.

6. In paragraph 33 of resolution 64/228, the General Assembly reaffirmed paragraphs 37 and 38 of section I of its resolution 63/270 and stressed the importance of ensuring effective oversight coverage of the plan. Section III of the present report provides information on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the reports of the Board of Auditors on the capital master plan. Section III.A provides information on the implementation of recommendations contained in the Board's report for the financial year ended 31 December 2007, and section III.B provides information on the implementation of recommendations from the Board's report for the financial year ended 31 December 2006 that were considered by the Board not to have been fully implemented.[3]

II. United Nations

A. Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations for the biennium ended 31 December 2009

Overview

7. Set out below is the information requested by the General Assembly on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the report of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations for the biennium ended 31 December 2009. Most of the Administration's comments have already been included in the Board's report; thus, additional comments are provided below only where required.

8. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the status of implementation of recommendations as at August 2010.

Table 1
Status of implementation of main recommendations

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Not accepted*	*Implemented*	*In progress*	*Target date set*	*No target date*
Department for General Assembly and Conference Management	1	—	1			—
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	2			2	2	
Department of Management	13		4	9	8	1
Office of Internal Oversight Services	1			1	1	
Department of Public Information	1			1	1	
Department of Safety and Security	2			2	2	
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	2			2	2	
Office of the Ombudsman	1			1	1	
Multiple departments	2			2	2	
Total	**25**		**5**	**20**	**19**	**1**

[3] Ibid., *Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 5* (A/62/5), vol. V.

9. Table 1 and chart 1 summarize the status of the 25 main recommendations of the Board. The implementation of 20 recommendations is in progress. The one recommendation for which no target date has been set pertains to an ongoing activity.

Figure I

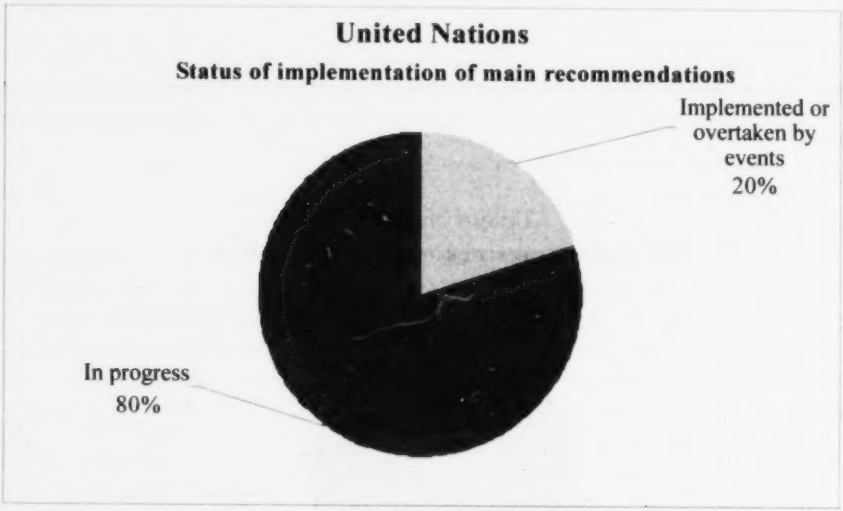
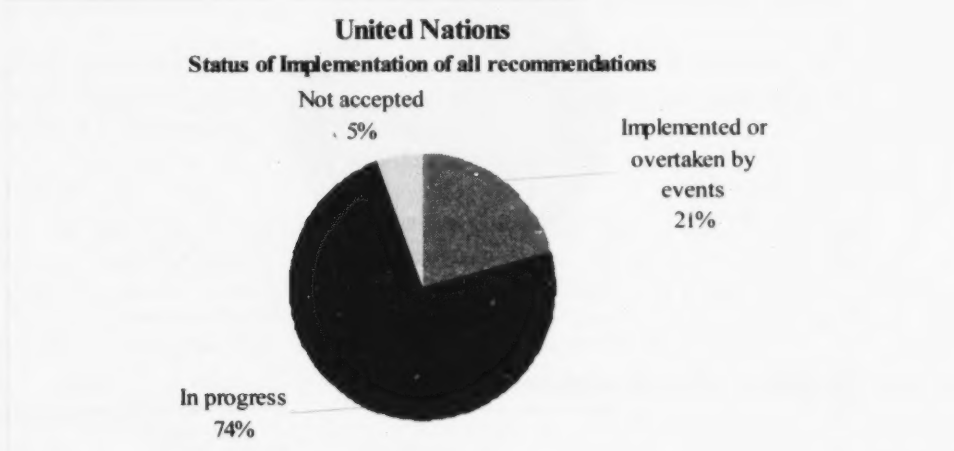

United Nations
Status of implementation of main recommendations
Implemented or overtaken by events 20%
In progress 80%

Table 2
Status of implementation of all recommendations

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Not accepted*	*Implemented or overtaken by events*	*In progress*	*Target date set*	*No target date*
Department for General Assembly and Conference Management	8		2	6	2	4
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	4	2		2	2	
Department of Management	28	2	7	19	17	2
International Civil Service Commission	1			1	1	
Office of Internal Oversight Services	2			2	2	
Department of Public Information	2		1	1	1	
Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support	1			1	1	
United Nations Office at Geneva	2		2			
Department of Safety and Security	5			5	5	
United Nations Office at Vienna	1		1			
Economic Commission for Africa	1			1	0	1
Economic Commission for Latin America	1			1	1	
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	2		1	1	1	
International Court of Justice	2			2	2	
INSTRAW	1				0	
Office of Legal Affairs	1			1	0	1

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Not accepted*	*Implemented or overtaken by events*	*In progress*	*Target date set*	*No target date*
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	3			3	3	
Office of the Ombudsman	2		1	1	1	
Multiple departments	5			5	5	
Total	**72**	**4**	**16**	**52**	**44**	**8**

Figure II



10. Table 2 and figure II summarize the status of all 72 recommendations of the Board. The implementation of 52 recommendations is in progress. With regard to the eight recommendations for which no target date has been set, seven pertain to ongoing activities, and with respect to one recommendation, the target date is still to be determined. Of the 44 recommendations for which target dates have been set, 15 are for implementation by the end of 2010, 23 by the end of 2011 and 6 are to be implemented after 31 December 2011.

Detailed information on implementation status

11. **In paragraph 25, the Board recommended that the Secretariat (a) plan for the automated preparation of the financial statements under Umoja; and (b) without waiting for the implementation of Umoja, enhance internal documentation on the preparation of the financial statements, and more generally, on all financial procedures, notably by updating the Financial Manual.**

12. The Secretariat is currently in the process of finalizing the new Finance Manual and it is expected to be issued by end of 2010. As far as the automated financial statement is concerned, the target date is envisaged for 2014.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2014

13. **In paragraph 33, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it complete the staffing of the IPSAS project team and finalize the detailed timetable and project plan for IPSAS implementation.**

14. The recommendation is accepted, however, the Administration provides the additional comments described below.

15. It is recalled that implementation of Umoja is a prerequisite for IPSAS implementation and, it was only when the General Assembly had indicated in December 2009 its support for multi-year funding of Umoja that it made sense to complete the hiring of the remaining staff members of the IPSAS team. As such at the time of the audit, those recruitment actions were at the final stages. However, in June 2010 following review of Support Account for 2010-2011, the General Assembly decided not to provide general temporary assistance funds for two P-4 and two P-3 positions related to IPSAS. As IPSAS remains a mandated priority for the Organization, the Administration is currently considering alternative means of fully staffing the United Nations IPSAS team.

16. At the same time, implementation of IPSAS is being closely synchronized with Umoja implementation, and overseen by the IPSAS Steering Committee. This includes review of detailed project plans and related timings, as appropriate.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

17. **In paragraph 37, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that all the offices away from Headquarters and the regional commissions strengthen their preparation for the implementation of IPSAS, in liaison with Headquarters, and in particular assess the financial and human resources required to prepare and implement this reform.**

18. The IPSAS project at the United Nations is being centrally led and plans are coordinated with all other Secretariat offices. As part of this process, all the major offices away from Headquarters and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (representing the regional commissions), are members of the IPSAS Steering Committee. That serves to ensure the widest possible participation and for "local" issues to be fully considered. It is also another means of informing offices with regard to overall progress/direction of IPSAS. In this structure, it is redundant for offices away from Headquarters and regional commissions to develop their own detailed plans for IPSAS implementation, for which resources are to be centrally provided.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Not accepted
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

19. **In paragraph 51, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it revisit its accounting treatment of education grants.**

20. The Board makes the case that under the United Nations system accounting standards, paragraph 38, all disbursements should be considered as expenditures. The Administration does not agree with this notion, as many types of disbursements (such as advances to staff members, including for travel and education grants, remittances to other offices, loans from one entity to another, prepayments and so on) do not, and should not constitute expenditures. Furthermore, the Administration considers the distinction between disbursements and expenditures to be so fundamental that it would be inconceivable for the two to be interchangeable; this principle is enshrined in all of the recognized and widely accepted accounting standards.

21. In paragraph 51, the Board recommended that the Administration revisit the accounting treatment of education grants. Notwithstanding the Administration's disagreement with paragraph 44, and bearing in mind the "substance over form" principle in the United Nations system accounting standards, paragraph 5 (ii), the recommendation is accepted.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

22. **In paragraph 60, the Board recommended that the Administration expedite the publication of the monthly report on the status of contributions.**

23. This recommendation has been overtaken by events. As of May 2010 the Administration has implemented the first phase of the contributions portal, whereby current information on assessments is now made readily available to all Member States. As such, the monthly report no longer serves its original intended purpose, as the information is now available online.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Overtaken by events
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

24. **In paragraph 62, the Board recommended that the Secretariat define a strategy to streamline and further automate the management of voluntary contributions, along the lines of the redesign of assessed contributions procedures.**

25. A strategy will be defined and implemented. It will be based on (a) the IMIS approval of receivables as they are created (rather than in batches); (b) the application of deposits in IMIS upon approval of the receivables; and (c) the automation of cash received voucher issuance for voluntary contributions based on the resulting IMIS data. Parts (a) and (b) of this strategy are already in place in accordance with earlier Board of Auditor recommendations and the automation envisioned in part (c) has been included in 2010/11 project workplans. While the above general strategy has been defined, the exact timing of implementation of part (c) is dependent on the actual roll-out date of the project in the context of the overall information technology workplans, which already include a number of other ongoing higher priority information technology projects, such as the enhancements to the online portal for assessed contributions.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

26. **In paragraph 66, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it develop indicators to measure the processing times for contributions.**

27. This recommendation will be developed in conjunction with the automation of the voluntary contributions management and cash received voucher issuance.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

28. **In paragraph 71, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that, in conjunction with the relevant substantive offices, it define, communicate and manage a standard procedure that would ensure that donors provided the required information in support of their payments.**

29. The form provided to donors for the annual United Nations pledging conference has been updated to include a standard note to read: "In order to ensure proper recording at the time of payment, all payments should include information regarding the donor and the activity/fund to which the contribution should be applied." In addition, the annual communication to Executive Officers on contributions pledged to United Nations trust funds will, in future, further emphasize that donors should be reminded of the importance of the inclusion of

information in support of payments. The above will complement the standard information provided to permanent missions to the United Nations regarding bank accounts and wire transfer modalities.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

30. **In paragraph 93, the Board recommended that the Administration consider ways to render the preparation of the financial statements on technical cooperation less cumbersome and more easily auditable.**

31. In reviewing the process for preparing the technical cooperation financial statement (Vol. I, statement VI), it is necessary to consider the purpose of this statement, which is to provide readers with a financial overview of Secretariat-wide technical cooperation activities. As those activities are funded from both extrabudgetary funds and the regular budget, this statement necessarily includes activities funded from both sources. This is an essential requirement, as unlike extrabudgetary resources, unspent regular budget balances cannot be carried forward for use in the next biennium.

32. The procedures used by the Accounts Division are based on this distinction, which is unavoidable. However, additional procedures are used to make the results reliable, as described below.

33. The process for the preparation of the consolidated statement VI includes the consolidation of the individual statement VI reports for each location, which are prepared using the IMIS report ACLDGB50 and a related script. When run consecutively, the trial balances of the extrabudgetary funds are grouped for reporting in the local statement VI in the prescribed format. The content of the ACLDGB50 report is auditable as it is linked to the accounting databases at Headquarters and each of the local offices shown in statement VI. Further, accuracy of the values reported in each local statement VI is verified by the Accounts Division, Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, and the related working paper files are retained in its Technical Cooperation Unit. The verification process ensures that the values reported for individual funds in the ACLDGB50 summary exactly match the values reported in the final trial balance for each fund, and that title fund group summaries computed by the script for the local statements VI are complete and accurately reported.

34. Further, the values reported for regular budget-funded technical cooperation expenditure in each local statement VI are also further verified through comparison with the worksheet to section 22 of statement IV, which provides for each location an overview of the regular budget technical cooperation appropriation, related total expenditures by category of expenditure, and the unencumbered balance of the appropriation.

35. As the preparation of statement VI for each location can be verified by reference to the respective IMIS database, and the working papers, the

Administration does not agree with the recommendation; bearing in mind as well that the underlying process for generation is based on the desired content of statement VI and that verifiable audit trails are being generated for it. Further, it considers that the added costs of further automation at this stage, prior to Umoja implementation, would outweigh the benefits.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Not accepted
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

36. **In paragraph 98, the Board recommended that the Administration strengthen internal control over the inactive technical cooperation trust funds and expedite the closing of those funds that need to be closed.**

37. All funds listed in annex III of the Board's report as "Approved for closure" have now been closed. The Secretariat will coordinate with the relevant substantive offices to expedite, wherever possible, all action needed to effect closure of the funds listed as "pending closure or in the process of being reviewed for closure" and any other identified inactive funds by the target date. The recommendation is accepted; however, it is noted that none of the inactive trust funds had significant or current balances.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

38. **In paragraph 107, the Board recommended that the Secretariat formalize the distribution of tasks between the Office of Legal Affairs, the Controller's Office and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for the management of the United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials (UNAKRT).**

39. The Secretariat finds it unnecessary to adopt a protocol to formalize the distribution of tasks, particularly since the audit confirmed that the sharing of responsibilities had evolved and was working. The Secretariat would also highlight that other than administration; the issues addressed in New York have overlapping elements and therefore naturally involve all three offices. The recommendation to formalize the distribution of tasks between the offices could be detrimental to the current methodology of coordinated management decisions. Nevertheless, given the valid observation that there is no document which defines the arrangements between the three offices, the Secretariat would agree to prepare a brief outline of the management arrangements within the headquarters offices in supporting UNAKRT for record purposes only.

Department responsible:	Office of Legal Affairs/Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

40. **In paragraph 116, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that UNAKRT, for the preparation of its future budgets, reviews its estimation methodology with a view to better taking into account the actual implementation of previous budgets.**

41. The Administration does not agree that UNAKRT should utilize an estimation methodology based on actual expenses. The Administration is of the view that its methodology should be forward-looking and based on the anticipated programme of work. The Court must also ensure that budgetary endorsement is obtained for all potential requirements to support the judicial processes, fully cognizant that some of those processes may be deferred owing to changes in the court's schedule. While it is important to secure funding, the Administration is mindful of the increasing costs of the Court, and makes every conscious effort to commit funds only on a when-needed basis. Mindful of the current financial climate and the difficulties in mobilizing sufficient resources to support the approved budget, the Court encourages savings when possible.

Department responsible:	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Status:	Not accepted
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

42. **In paragraph 121, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that UNAKRT sets up a dashboard for all parties that contain the main indicators (vacancy rate for posts, turnaround time and productivity for the translation unit, turnaround time and productivity for processing requests for complainants).**

43. The Secretariat is of the view that the Court has made marked improvements in reporting on performance since its inception. Nevertheless, it agrees to continue to expand its use of performance indicators, and to develop new benchmarks, particularly against the new Indicative Court Schedule. Since the outputs are combined deliverables of both components of the Court, the Secretariat would suggest that the recommendation also refer to the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, rather than limit the same to UNAKRT.

Department responsible:	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

44. **In paragraph 131, the Board recommended that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) continue its efforts to rationalize the technical cooperation trust funds by preparing each year for the Trade and Development Board: (a) a list of new trust funds with a brief justification for their establishment; and (b) a list of inactive funds with an explanation of the reasons for their continuation.**

45. In response to part (a) of the recommendation, the list of new trust funds has been included in the statistical annex of the annual report on technical cooperation provided to the Trade and Development Board. Justification for establishment of the new trust funds will be provided in an informal document to Member States at the Working Party on the strategic framework and the programme budget in September. In response to part (b), a list of inactive projects (projects with no expenditures over the past year) is being compiled and this information will be provided to the Working Party in September 2010.

Department responsible:	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Third quarter of 2010

46. **In paragraph 135, the Board recommended that UNCTAD: (a) prepare a management manual for technical cooperation projects that brings together all applicable procedures, in particular in the area of monitoring; and (b) make sure that progress reports are distributed to donors by the Technical Cooperation Service as stipulated in the funding agreements.**

47. In response to part (a) of the recommendation, the two largest extrabudgetary programmes, debt management and financial analysis system and the automated system for customs data, which together account for over 50 per cent of UNCTAD extrabudgetary activities, have developed project officer manuals for their staff, comprising all applicable procedures. A general management manual on technical cooperation, bringing together all applicable procedures, will be completed by the end of 2011. Part (b) is already implemented, as both progress reports for the current year and financial reports for the prior year are sent to each donor in April of every year.

Department/body responsible:	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

48. **In paragraph 146, the Board recommended that the Administration strengthen the internal controls over the inactive general trust funds and expedite the closing of those funds that need to be closed.**

49. The fund listed in annex III as "Approved for closure" has now been closed. The Administration will coordinate with the relevant substantive offices to expedite, wherever possible, all action needed to effect closure of the funds listed as "pending closure or in the process of being reviewed for closure" in annex III of the Board's report, and any other identified inactive funds by the target date.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

50. **In paragraph 156, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it: (a) increase the frequency of contractual audits of health claims; and (b) examine ways to strengthen internal controls over claim reimbursements.**

51. Part (b) of the recommendation, which relates to strengthening controls over claim reimbursements to the extent possible, has very limited practical applicability. The Administration will examine this further, and review the possibility of performing periodic eligibility validation checks. Given confidentiality and other constraints, it is essentially not feasible to substantively implement that part of the recommendation in a meaningful manner.

52. The target dates are December 2013 for the next health claims audit and December 2011 for examining ways to strengthen internal controls over claim reimbursements. Health claim audits should be conducted approximately every three years; the next audit is therefore scheduled for 2013.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2013

53. **In paragraph 160, the Board recommended to the Administration that it strengthen internal controls to ensure the accuracy of its payable and receivable balances with counterpart entities as at the end of the financial period.**

54. The Secretariat does not agree with the observation in paragraph 158 that the "Administration could not provide an exhaustive and detailed account for the discrepancies". During the course of the audit, detailed analysis and reconciliations of the discrepancies was provided, demonstrating that the discrepancies are attributable to timing and other differences. As such, the Secretariat believes that internal controls are in place to ensure accuracy of accounts receivable and payable with the agencies.

55. At the same time, the Secretariat also accepts that such procedures could be further strengthened. On the other hand, it would be very cumbersome and practically not feasible to fully reconcile all receivable and payable balances, given the number of accounts involved, the nature of differences, and the limited time available under the closing schedule.

56. The focus in the coming years will be on implementation of Umoja and IPSAS, and all available resources will be dedicated to those major goals. Hence, implementation will be synchronized with Umoja, which is expected to be in place by December 2013.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2013

57. **In paragraph 164, the Board also recommended to the Administration that it reduce the time taken for certifying invoices so as to conform to accrual-based accounting.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

58. **In paragraph 191, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it consider revising its policy for the valuation of leave liability in its implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.**

59. The Administration notes that the treatment of annual leave under IPSAS 25 mirrors that under International Accounting Standard (IAS) 19, and following their recent review of IAS 19, the International Accounting Standard Board has provided additional guidance. IAS 19 provides that the critical factor in distinguishing

between long-term and short-term benefits is the timing of their expected settlement, which would drive the classification.

60. The Administration treated the commuted annual leave benefit as a long-term benefit, because commuted annual leave is payable only when a staff member separates from the Organization and, in accordance with conventionally applied last-in-first-out protocols, is derived from unused annual leave days that have gradually accrued over the entire active careers of staff members. As such, that benefit does not meet the requirements of a short-term benefit under paragraph 10 of IPSAS 25, which defines short-term employee benefits as "benefits (other than termination benefits) which fall due wholly within twelve months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service".

61. Commuted annual leave has therefore been treated as a long-term benefit, and has been measured at the current value of the obligation in accordance with the projected unit credit methodology prescribed under IPSAS. As such, the Administration considers that its valuation using actuarial principles that take into account, inter alia, the future rate of accumulation and discounting to present-day values, to be consistent with the relevant requirements under IPSAS 25.

62. However, given the audit concerns and possible different interpretations of overall leave benefits and variances in treatment of the issue across the United Nations system, the Administration intends to discuss this further with the IPSAS system-wide group with a view to developing a harmonized approach across the United Nations system.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

63. **In paragraph 203, the Board recommended to the Administration that it review the logical framework of results-based budgeting with a view to making it more precise.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

64. **In paragraph 208, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it clarify the objectives of the results-based budgeting process in order to make them more consistent with the existing system and thereby obtain greater support from actors concerned within the Organization.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

65. **In paragraph 212, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management use the same metrics for the indicators used to set targets and to measure performance.**

66. The strategic framework for 2012-2013, which will form the basis for the next budget, has been fully aligned across all duty stations. Targets have been standardized and set at absolute levels (i.e., 100 per cent, or 0), as an ever-present indicator of the desired goal, which will highlight more clearly the measure of achievement at each duty station. In addition, working groups are in place to ensure the standardization of all metrics at all duty stations. Accordingly, the recommendation will be implemented in the next budget cycle.

Department responsible:	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

67. **In paragraph 216, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management compares targets against achievements to measure its performance.**

68. The Monitoring, Evaluation, Risk Management and Statistical Verification Unit was established in 2009 and ensures in-depth measurement and analysis of all Department for General Assembly and Conference Management targets.

Department responsible:	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

69. **In paragraph 220, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management: (a) substantiate the lowering of its targets; and**

(b) harmonize the methods used to define targets for the meetings implementation rate in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi.

70. For the 2012-2013 strategic framework, all targets have been standardized and set at absolute levels (i.e., 100 per cent, or 0), as an ever-present indicator of the desired goal. Accordingly, the implementation of this recommendation will be implemented in the next budget cycle.

Department responsible:	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

71. **In paragraph 223, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the definition of objectives, expected achievements and indicators of achievement for each subprogramme in the product of a more in-depth dialogue between programme managers and the secretariat, with a view to increasing the utility of the programme of work as a management tool during the implementation phase.**

72. During the process of formulating the strategic framework for the biennium 2010-2011, a series of workshops were organized to develop the results framework for each subprogramme with the participation of concerned Professional category staff and programme managers in the ESCAP secretariat drawing from the outcomes of a senior management retreat convened by the Executive Secretary. The definition of objectives, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement in the strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013 was developed by the Senior Management Team in conjunction with the organizational effectiveness initiative exercise led by the Executive Secretary.

Department responsible:	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

73. **In paragraph 227, ESCAP agreed with the Board's recommendation that it make a clear distinction between outputs which are part of its day-to-day management and those that constitute essential elements in the work of the Organization, ensuring that lists of non-quantified routine tasks are avoided.**

74. In accordance with the management response from ESCAP to that audit recommendation, outputs for the 2012-2013 programme of work will be formulated with even stronger links to the relevant expected accomplishments. The outputs included in the programme of work will be quantified consistently and in

accordance with the global instructions issued by United Nations Headquarters for the formulation of the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013.

Department responsible:	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

75. **In paragraph 237, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the choice of investment solutions and the link between the composition of the portfolio, its liquidity, its profitability objective and its exposure to risks are more precisely formalized and documented in the United Nations Investment Management Guidelines.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

76. **In paragraph 240, the Board recommended that the Administration enhance the reporting on: (a) the investment strategy chosen; and (b) the daily implementation of that strategy.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

77. **In paragraph 242, the Board recommended that the Administration supplement the performance assessment framework for cash management with specific objectives regarding the composition, liquidity and duration of the portfolio.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

78. **In paragraph 245, the Board recommended that the Administration: (a) define, formalize and implement procedures relating to the monitoring of all limits set out in the United Nations Investment Management Guidelines; and (b) design and maintain a consolidated score card integrating the monitoring of all limits, with a view to reporting the results of that monitoring to the Investment Committee.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

79. **In paragraph 251, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it re-examine and, where necessary, redistribute the missions and activities of the Publications Board.**

80. Although the Administration does not agree that the activities of the Publications Board should be redistributed, it is recommended that the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2005/15 be revised so that the Publications Board, in addition to being a standard-setting body, can be reinstated as the focal point for the publishing process within the Organization. The review of the publications programmes, the coordination and streamlining of the publication flow, the oversight of costs and proper budget allocations, and the implementation of new mechanisms can be effectively achieved only if the Publications Board, as the central body of the Organization for all publishing and copyright issues, is entrusted with the authority, responsibility and means to provide them.

Department responsible:	Department of Public Information
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2012

81. **In paragraph 256, the Board recommended to the Administration that it ensure that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs takes measures to increase the coordination of publications, in terms of both content and editorial priorities, in particular in order to avoid overlap in publications.**

Department responsible:	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

82. **In paragraph 260, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs plan for mandatory documents aimed at the general public is the subject of an evaluation of results, which could then be forwarded to the main body that mandated the publication of the documents.**

83. The requested evaluation is done through a variety of means, including through internal discussions, feedback from the member of the Executive Committee of Economic and Social Affairs (for those involving collaboration with members of the Executive Committee), media coverage and sales figures.

84. The publications aimed at the general public are not subsidized. External publishers decide whether a publication is of interest and have, in the past, rejected certain publications. A differential pricing policy ensures that books are affordable in developing countries. Since there is no money for the publications programme, there is no systematic evaluation.

85. As the United Nations develops print-on-demand technology, there will be smaller print-runs. Currently, there is usually no price difference whether, for example, 500 or 1,000 copies are printed.

Department responsible:	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Status:	Not accepted
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

86. **In paragraph 265, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the annual report of the Secretary-General on the pattern of conferences provides statistics to measure the total number of meetings with a view to assessing changes in that variable.**

87. The pattern of conferences report for 2010 will reflect data on the total number of meetings managed at all duty stations.

Department responsible:	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

88. **In paragraph 270, the Board recommended to the Administration that it ensure that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management conducts a performance analysis for all meetings with interpretation and for each conference centre.**

89. Via the eMeets system and the surveys which are available for every meeting, detailed meetings performance data is available for all duty stations.

Department responsible:	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

90. **In paragraph 274, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management urgently implements a plan for the transition phase of the capital master plan, in order to have precise knowledge of the needs and to provide operational tools to deal with them.**

91. There is active monitoring and discussion of issues in the evolving workplace related to the execution of the capital master plan, through focal points in every Department for General Assembly and Conference Management discipline. Issues are addressed at the highest levels with the appropriate capital master plan or Department of Management officials.

Department responsible:	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

92. **In paragraph 282, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation to ensure that the Department of Public Information does not create regional coordination platforms until a detailed study has been made of their operational and geographical competencies.**

93. The Administration agrees with the recommendation and is currently not contemplating the establishment of new regional coordination platforms. However, the United Nations Information Centre that will be established in Luanda, Angola, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, is expected to play a role in coordinating the translation, printing and dissemination of information material to other Lusophone countries. In this regard, it will work closely with the United Nations Information Centre in Rio de Janeiro and the Portuguese Desk in the United Nations Regional Information Centre in Brussels.

Department responsible:	Department of Public Information
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

94. **In paragraph 286, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation to issue a Secretary-General's bulletin setting out the organization and responsibilities of the Department of Safety and Security, including those of the Division of Headquarters Security and Safety Services.**

Department responsible:	Department of Safety and Security
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2011

95. **In paragraph 294, the Board recommended that the Administration reassess the staffing needs of the New York-based head office of the Division of Headquarters Security and Safety Services of the Department of Safety and Security.**

Department responsible:	Department of Safety and Security
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	First quarter of 2011

96. **In paragraph 305, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the Department of Safety and Security significantly strengthens its system of internal control over the implementation of minimum operational security standards at United Nations Secretariat headquarters locations.**

Department responsible:	Department of Safety and Security
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	First quarter of 2011

97. **In paragraph 311, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the Office of Legal Affairs defines and specifies intermediate management objectives and indicators for each stage of the treaty publication process.**

98. The Administration believes that the idea of "intermediate indicators" relating to the average time required for publication of treaties is a practical one. With the objective of improving the treaty publication process, the Administration, with the assistance of a management consultant, has reviewed the process. The review was based on standard business process improvement methodology. The report which emerged from the review included an analysis of the technology supporting the processes. The Administration is currently examining ways to implement the recommendations of the report, including the possible establishment of a revised

and updated publications process. Such a process would seek to incorporate greater web publication and enhancements to the online version of the United Nations Treaty Series. An upgrading of the supporting technology which supports the treaty publication process is currently being carried out. It is planned that the new processes will document the intermediate management objectives and indicators for each stage of the treaty process. The review of the work of the Treaty Section in the Office of Legal Affairs mentioned above, including the review of the treaty publication process, was undertaken to assist in the improvement of the implementation of the programme of work of the Section. There are a number of aspects to the project, including staffing, technology and process changes. Additionally, the Office of Legal Affairs will seek to strengthen relationships within the United Nations as part of the overall effort to build improvements, including in the area of translation.

Department responsible:	Office of Legal Affairs
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	To be determined

99. **In paragraph 320, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the Department of Political Affairs, together with the Department of Management and the Department of Field Support, agrees on a precise and operational division of responsibilities for the administrative backstopping of special political missions, especially regarding procurement.**

100. This recommendation has been accepted by all parties concerned. The precise and operational division of responsibilities for backstopping the special political missions, especially regarding procurement, are being discussed by the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Field Support and the Department of Management.

Department responsible:	Department of Political Affairs/Department of Management/Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

101. **In paragraph 320, the Board recommended that the Administration:**

(a) **Regularize all purchases made by the United Nations Office for West Africa from 1 January 2008 in the absence of delegation;**

(b) **Grant the United Nations Office for West Africa delegation of procurement authority, even if only for low-value procurement;**

(c) **Should the delegation not be forthcoming, or pending its actual implementation, give detailed operating instructions to the Office in order for it**

to carry out procurement activities in compliance with the United Nations Procurement Manual.

102. Recommendation (a) is accepted. With respect to recommendations (b) and (c), the nature of that delegation is part of the discussions referred to in the Secretariat's response to paragraph 320 above.

Department responsible:	Department of Political Affairs/Department of Management/Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

103. **In paragraph 329, the Board recommended that the Administration regularize on an ex post facto basis the procurement actions that the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) undertook before it obtained delegation of procurement authority.**

104. This recommendation is accepted. The mission is in the process of regularizing its prior procurement actions in accordance with the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules and the Procurement Manual.

Department responsible:	Department of Political Affairs/Department of Management/Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2011

105. **In paragraph 330, the Board also recommended that the Administration ensure that UNIPSIL strictly adheres to the procurement rules of the United Nations.**

106. This recommendation is accepted. Instructions have been issued to UNIPSIL related to the full compliance with United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules concerning procurement and with the Procurement Manual.

Department responsible:	Department of Management/Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	First quarter of 2011

107. **In paragraph 336, the Board recommended that the Administration strengthen and expedite the reconciliation process between the physical**

inventory data and the accounting data relating to non-expendable property to ensure a fair valuation of those items in the notes to the financial statements.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Second quarter of 2011

108. **In paragraph 341, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the United Nations Office at Geneva appoints one person to manage premises owned by the United Nations that are leased out to third parties.**

109. This recommendation has been implemented. A staff member has been appointed to manage premises owned by the United Nations that are leased out to third parties.

Department responsible:	United Nations Office at Geneva
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

110. **In paragraph 348, the Board recommended that the Administration:**

(a) **Put in place a governance structure for the United Nations Office at Geneva property renovation project that brings together the two United Nations headquarters in New York and Geneva;**

(b) **Ensure that the United Nations Office at Geneva is provided with the staff members required to implement and follow up on programmed works.**

111. An initial governance structure for the United Nations Office at Geneva Strategic Heritage Plan that brings together the two United Nations headquarters in New York and Geneva has been put in place. The United Nations Office at Geneva was provided with the staff for the implementation of the conceptual and engineering study to be submitted to the General Assembly at its resumed session in 2011.

Department responsible:	United Nations Office at Geneva
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

112. **In paragraph 352, the Board recommends that the Administration ensure that the United Nations Office at Vienna complies with United Nations financial rule 105.22 for handling property losses.**

113. The draft text mentions that the United Nations Office at Vienna/United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Property Survey Board was properly renewed through the issuance of a circular dated 27 March 2009. It should be noted that since then two other circulars were issued, on 19 October 2009 and 16 June 2010.

Department responsible:	United Nations Office at Vienna
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

114. **In paragraph 356, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the United Nations Office for West Africa manages its non-expendable property in accordance with the relevant United Nations rules.**

115. The mission was provided with guidance and policy documents related to property management, including the Property Management Manual, the Liquidation Manual, Directives on Property Control and Accountability/Management, as well as access to the Property Management Community of Practice, which contains a full library of relevant material. Those documents provide guidance and set key performance indicators that address the findings in the draft report. In addition, the requirements of the above-mentioned guidance and policy documents were reiterated in the Department of Field Support Directive of Property Control and Management for Financial Year 2009, issued on 19 November 2008. All field missions, including special political missions, will again be advised of the requirements of the above-mentioned guidance and policy documents in the next Directive on Property Management to be issued in September 2010.

Department responsible:	Department of Peacekeeping Operations/ Department of Field Support
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2011

116. **In paragraph 360, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women:**

(a) **Improves the quality of its inventory so that it reflects the exact status of non-expendable property;**

(b) **Clarifies the situation of items in its possession that are the property of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti so that they can be monitored separately.**

Department responsible:	International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

117. **In paragraph 366, the Board recommends that the Administration assess the need to update the set of competencies in order to:**

(a) **Adapt competencies to the current requirements of the Organization;**

(b) **Clarify the definition of competencies and levels;**

(c) **Introduce competencies in relation to technical expertise, apart from behavioural and managerial competencies.**

118. A request for proposal has been issued and it is currently under consideration with the relevant offices so as to engage a vendor who will assist with the review and update the competency framework.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	First quarter of 2011

119. **In paragraph 372, the Board recommended to the Administration that it appraise the functioning of recruitment panels and review the features of the training in competency-based recruitment (obligation to attend, duration and content).**

120. With regard to recruitment panels, the new staff selection system policy contained in administrative instruction ST/AI/2010/3 contemplates the creation of assessment panels which would assess the qualifications and background of candidates for advertised positions. With regard to the composition and functioning of the assessment panels (panels of experts) details on the roles and responsibilities of the panels as well as the profile of the panel members have been drawn up and included in the instructional manual for hiring managers. Hiring managers are required to ensure that all assessment panels are composed of staff members holding an appointment other than a temporary appointment; serve at the same or at a higher level than that of the job opening; and, are not the current/temporary position incumbent or the position incumbent that is to be replaced.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Ongoing

121. **In paragraph 377, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that all officials likely to appraise staff receive adequate training to this end, and that all other staff are given a general presentation on the appraisal interview.**

122. The Administration welcomes this recommendation and to complement existing learning/training modules on performance management, a mandatory performance management training module is being developed for managers/supervisors and it will be introduced in the fourth quarter of 2010. Staff briefing on the performance management process is ongoing through structured and scheduled workshops.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

123. **In paragraph 383, the Board recommended to the Administration that it assess its total training expenditure, irrespective of the nature of this expenditure and the origin of the corresponding resources.**

124. The Secretariat is working to address this issue with the relevant offices, however, tools and mechanisms to ensure this are not yet in place.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Second quarter of 2011

125. **In paragraph 387, the Board recommended that the Administration draw up a schedule by which the staff members who have not taken the mandatory training programmes be obliged to do so in a close time limit (one year or 18 months), and that the effective implementation be verified.**

126. Completion of mandatory training is one of the elements in the human resources action plans. Heads of department are accountable for compliance and reports are provided to the Management Performance Board.

127. In addition, the Administration considers 18 months a reasonable time frame for the completion of mandatory training programmes except for the Management Development Programme/Leadership Development Programme, where resource limitations exist.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

128. **In paragraph 390, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that all departments and offices draw up and document a medium- and short-term staff training strategy that would identify needs and objectives, and carry out a qualitative analysis of the results obtained.**

129. The Administration concurs with this recommendation and notes that a Secretariat-wide learning strategy, which will be promulgated in the coming months after appropriate consultation, has been drafted. Secretariat counterpart departments and offices will implement training according to the Secretariat strategy.

130. In addition, all peacekeeping missions are now required, pursuant to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support Policy Directive on Peacekeeping Training for all United Nations personnel, to prepare an annual training plan reflecting both in-mission needs and the three-year strategic training priorities established at Headquarters. The policy directive also stipulates the procedures for evaluating training.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

131. **In paragraph 402, the Board recommended that, considering the increasing reticence of employers from the private sector to supply data pertinent to the conditions of service of their staff, the International Civil Service Commission review its means of obtaining those data.**

132. This recommendation is accepted and compliance depends on a Commission decision at its 72nd session in spring 2011 and on a new General Service salary survey methodology, after 1 July 2011. The Commission Working Group on the Salary Survey Methodologies is considering the possibility of purchasing salary data from specialist providers of this type of information, in cases where private sector employer salary data is difficult or impossible to obtain.

Department responsible:	International Civil Service Commission
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2011

133. **In paragraph 409, the International Court of Justice agreed with the Board's recommendation that it consider the revision of the statutory aspects of the Instructions for the Registry.**

Department responsible:	International Court of Justice
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2012

134. **In paragraph 413, the Court agreed with the Board's recommendation that it update the Staff Regulations for its Registry.**

Department responsible:	International Court of Justice
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

135. **In paragraph 420, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) exercises strengthened control over its management of consultants and strictly complies with the relevant rules of the Organization on this matter.**

136. ECA has instituted the following steps to further strengthen the whole process starting from recruitment through utilization of consultants, performance evaluation to the final stages of payment with the aim of ensuring full and strict compliance with the relevant rules of the Organization:

(a) The ECA Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Matters and the Office of Strategic Planning and Programme Management has guidelines for planning and monitoring the use of consultants across ECA, keeping in mind the geographical diversity and gender balance required in this area. This has been incorporated in the Operational Guidelines of the Commission issued in October 1999, based primarily on the accountability for the use of the institutional/individual contract arrangement as stipulated in administrative instruction ST/AI/1999/7. In the Guidelines, particular mention is made of quarterly plans, which covered the specific cases of travel of staff members and the use of consultants across ECA. While the provisions of the guidelines on travel of staff have been enforced by the Office of Strategic Planning and Programme Management, compliance with the provisions of

engaging consultants has proven to be a challenge in the last few years. Hence, the decision of the recent meeting of the ECA Senior Management Team to reinstate the use of consultancy plans starting with the finalization of the ECA Programme Implementation Plan for 2010. These semi-annual plans derived from the Programme Implementation Plan will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the ECA Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Matters for recommendation to the Executive Secretary of the Commission. The Senior Management Team also formally decided that no request for engaging consultants or individual contractors would be submitted directly to the Human Resources Service Section without going through this mechanism. A semi-annual consultancy requirement form together with a quarterly monitoring matrix of consultancy assignments have been developed by the Office of Strategic Planning and Programme Management, which will mirror the provisions of the ECA annual Programme Implementation Plan for planning, monitoring and reporting purposes in the context of the United Nations results-based management framework. Furthermore, note should be taken of the fact that the new mechanism is planned to be further strengthened with the addition of the Integrated Central Data Repository System for consultants, which is in its final stage of testing;

(b) Targeted and detailed evaluations of consultant performance are conducted, measuring the quality of work performed against the goals established in the terms of reference, as well as compliance with contracted delivery dates;

(c) A template for performance evaluation has provisions that allow measuring the quality of work performed against the goals established as well as compliance with contracted delivery dates. This is in addition to the standardized format incorporated in IMIS;

(d) ECA takes a keen interest to ensure that there is a clear link between proposed consultancies and the programme of work. This has been an established practice in ECA to ensure that terms of reference for consultancy contracts are clear and specific and detail all the functions to be performed, including:

(i) objectives and targets;

(ii) tangible and measurable outputs of the work assignment;

(iii) realistic delivery dates; and

(iv) performance indicators for evaluation of results;

(e) ECA also makes sure that at least three qualified candidates are considered when awarding consultancy assignments and that complete documentation of the competitive selection process is maintained in the official file.

Department responsible:	Economic Commission for Africa
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Ongoing

137. **In paragraph 425, the Board recommended that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) take measures to better manage expenditure on consultants by: (a) making sure that all project**

managers are informed of the good practices developed; and (b) creating a common consultants database.

138. The revised Guidelines for engagement of consultants (expected in December 2010) will provide guidance on the recruitment of consultants, and streamline the processes involved. The UNCTAD Information Technology Section is currently creating a database for consultants. Interested candidates can register as consultants via the UNCTAD website. When registering, they indicate information regarding education and work experience, which can be searched by Human Resources Management Section staff as required. This roster will continue until Inspira covers this area.

Department responsible:	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

139. **In paragraph 432, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it establish a realistic schedule for the implementation of its "Carbon" project.**

140. A detailed implementation plan has been established, and monthly progress reports continue to be produced, highlighting issues with each duty station.

Department responsible:	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2010

141. **In paragraph 437, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it take appropriate measures to ensure that the "Carbon" project is interfaced with Umoja.**

142. It is anticipated that Umoja will be implemented by the end of 2013. Communication channels have been established with the Umoja team and integration will be addressed as appropriate, at such time as the Umoja project reaches the development stage.

Department responsible:	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2013

143. **In paragraph 445, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services gathers statistical measurements in the same manner in all services and that these measurements are handled in annual activity reports in the same format to reflect actual changes and to allow year-over-year comparisons.**

144. The Office of the Ombudsman has recently launched an integrated database, which relies on a common methodology for data collection and reporting. The system for recording and managing data is now fully integrated across the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services, using issue categories defined by the International Ombudsman Association. This will ensure consistency in identifying and interpreting trends and providing demographics of staff using the Office. It will also facilitate the identification of cross-cutting systemic issues and year-over-year comparisons. The Administration will assess the performance of the new database in the months ahead and identify areas of improvement based on the cases handled.

Department responsible:	United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

145. **In paragraph 449, the Board recommended to the Administration that it ensure that the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services guarantee, while drawing up its new tracking mechanisms, that the data used to measure the activity and performance of the Office are auditable, while preserving confidentiality.**

146. The Office of the Ombudsman intends to hire a consultant who will review its systems, identify ways of using data that is auditable for measuring the activity and performance of the Office and devise a road map for the implementation of that objective.

Department responsible:	United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Third quarter of 2011

147. **In paragraph 454, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that the Office of Internal Oversight Services expedite the completion of its risk assessments of all the entities over which it has authority.**

148. The Office of Internal Oversight Services completed the risk assessment for most of the clients and will be conducting the risk assessment for the remaining ones. The Office is also taking steps to further improve the productivity and to ensure that the staff vacancy rates are kept at an acceptable level. It has also been clarified that as of 31 December 2009, the Internal Audit Division had a total of 201 posts, of which 43 were vacant.

Department responsible:	Office of Internal Oversight Services
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

149. **In paragraph 456, the Board recommended that the Office of Internal Oversight Services further increase its completion rate of audit assignments, inter alia, by reducing the rate of vacancy of its posts.**

150. See the comments in the preceding paragraphs of the present report.

Department responsible:	Office of Internal Oversight Services
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

151. **In paragraph 476, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) examines ways of reducing the time lag of the administrative travel authorization procedures so as to optimize the costs of flight tickets.**

152. ECLAC has already created a working group that is reviewing the underlying situation and issues. The group is expected to make valid recommendations within the next few months.

Department responsible:	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

153. **In paragraph 481, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the Department of Safety and Security analyses security costs independently of contributing budgets (regular budget, extrabudgetary funds, budgets allocated by each agency to security) so as to have a complete view of resources allocated to security.**

Department responsible:	Department of Safety and Security
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Third quarter of 2011

154. **In paragraph 487, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that the Department of Safety and Security take measures, both direct and by delegation, aimed at assessing compliance with minimum operating security standards of the field offices in Kenya.**

Department responsible:	Department of Safety and Security
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

B. Implementation of the recommendations contained in the reports of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations for prior financial periods

Overview

155. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 62/223 A, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide a full explanation for delays in implementation of the recommendations of the Board for prior periods, in particular those recommendations not yet fully implemented which are two or more years old.

156. In annex I to its report for the biennium ended 31 December 2009, the Board provided a summary of the status of implementation of recommendations for previous financial periods. Information is provided below on the 29 recommendations shown as "partially implemented" in annex I. The information is set out in the order in which the recommendations are presented in annex I.

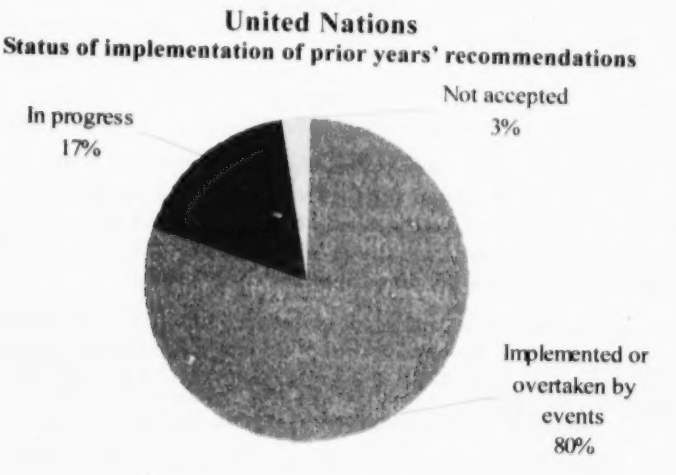
157. The following table summarizes the overall situation.

Table 3
Status of implementation of recommendations from prior periods considered not fully implemented in annex I to the report of the Board of Auditors for the biennium ended 31 December 2009

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Not accepted*	*Implemented or overtaken by events*	*In progress*	*Target date set*	*No target date*
Department for General Assembly and Conference Management	1	—		1	—	1
Department of Management	18		9	9	8	1
Economic Commission for Africa	1		1			
Multiple	2		2			
Office of the Chief Information Technology Officer	2			2	2	
United Nations Office at Nairobi	3	1	2			
United Nations Office at Vienna	1	1				
Subtotal	**28**	**2**	**14**	**12**	**10**	**2**
General Assembly	**1**					
Grand total	**29**					

158. As indicated in table 3, the implementation of 12 recommendations from prior years is in progress. The target dates for two recommendations are to be determined and the implementation of one is dependent on consideration by the General Assembly. The implementation of the additional 14 recommendations, shown in table 3 above, brings the total number of recommendations implemented or overtaken by events to 56 (80 per cent) of the original 70 issued in the biennium 2006-2007 (see figure III below).

Figure III



Detailed information on status of implementation

1. Report of the Board for the biennium 2006-2007

159. **In paragraph 27, the Board recommended that the Administration pursue its efforts to prepare for the consolidation or aggregation of the financial statements of the United Nations under IPSAS.**

160. The matter is under consideration. It was discussed during the February 2010 meeting of the IPSAS Steering Committee, and will be the subject of further consideration by the Office of Legal Affairs, and the Funds and Programmes. Subsequent to that, the consolidation approach will be presented to the Board of Auditors to obtain their views on the approach, prior to submission to the General Assembly. Final decision on consolidation will be made by the General Assembly.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

161. **In paragraph 41, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it expedite the automation process of contributions management in order to enable real-time management of data regarding payments made by Member States.**

162. Online web-based access for status of contributions (incorporating IMIS information on assessments, credits and outstanding amounts) has been available since May 2010.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

163. **In paragraph 47, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it design the future automated management system so as to indicate, in assessment notifications, the amount and allocation of the most recent payments received, the status of payments due and payable and the calculation used to obtain the amount of the contribution.**

164. The online web-based information referred to in the preceding paragraph includes information on amounts assessed, the scale percentage, a reference to the assessment document that details the assessment calculation, and the amount and allocation of the payments received.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

165. **In paragraph 51, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it examine the possibility of sending universal reminder letters to Member States at the end of each quarter in order to increase the collection rate of contributions.**

166. The online web-based information includes information on the status of contributions, updated on a daily basis. Following the roll-out, enhancements include the ability for the Secretariat to transmit, or for Member States to request, the status of contributions via e-mail on a regular basis. Amounts outstanding for each mission are also included in the respective assessment letters at the time of issuance of new assessments.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

167. **In paragraph 67, the Board recommended that the Organization adopt a funding strategy for its end-of-service and post-retirement liabilities.**

168. The matter was addressed by the Secretary-General in his report (A/64/366) outlining three funding strategies for end-of-service and post-retirement liabilities applicable to United Nations staff members. The report was reviewed by the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session and will be further considered by the Assembly at its sixty-seventh session.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Implementation is dependent on decision by the General Assembly

169. **In paragraph 151, the Board recommended that the Administration prepare a monthly scorecard on performance indicators dealing with requisitioners' perceptions and procurement procedure lead times.**

170. A consultant, PwC, has been retained to complete this project, which has recently commenced. The Procurement Division is currently reviewing the preliminary observations of the consultant, whose work is ongoing. It is estimated

that the project will be completed in the fourth quarter of 2010. The work of the consultant will include preparing performance indicators dealing with requisitioners' perceptions and procurement procedure lead times, as well as an assessment of requisitioners' satisfaction with procurement at certain intervals, and will evaluate the results thereof.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

171. **In paragraph 152, the Board recommended that the Administration conduct an independent assessment of requisitioners' satisfaction with procurement at certain intervals and evaluate the results.**

172. As indicated in the Administration's response to paragraph 151 above, a consultant, PwC, has been retained to complete this project, which has recently commenced. The Administration is currently reviewing the preliminary observations of the consultant, whose work is ongoing. It is estimated that the project will be completed in the fourth quarter of 2010. The work of the consultant will include preparing performance indicators dealing with requisitioners' perceptions and procurement procedure lead times, as well as an assessment of requisitioners' satisfaction with procurement at certain intervals, and will evaluate the results thereof.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Second quarter of 2010

173. **In paragraph 186, the Board also recommended that the Administration prepare and implement formalized internal control procedures over non-expendable property to ensure that information provided on the total value of the equipment in use at the end of accounting periods is reliable.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	To be determined

174. **In paragraph 201, the Board recommended that the Administration implement an overall strategy for the use of office space.**

175. The feasibility study started in March 2010 and its scope was expanded to include a long-term office space analysis for United Nations Headquarters. Completion is now expected for the end of 2010. Taking into account the impact of the capital master plan as well the need for internal review and approval, the target date for the implementation of an overall strategy for the use of office space has been changed to the fourth quarter of 2011.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

176. **In paragraph 203, the Board recommended that the Administration formulate written procedures for space management and ensure their application in the following areas: planning for needs; allocating place and arbitrating requests; retrieving floor space; and limiting urgent requests.**

177. The increase in workload continues to affect progress in the implementation of the recommendation, but resources have now been dedicated to the formulation of procedures and development of a scoreboard and work is in progress.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2011

178. **In paragraph 207, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation to take appropriate measures to bring the Headquarters building systems into full compliance with safety standards.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2013

179. **In paragraph 209, the Board recommended that the Administration draw up a comprehensive scoreboard for the use of space and share it with department heads.**

180. The increase in workload continues to affect progress in the implementation of the recommendation, but resources have now been dedicated to the formulation of procedures and development of a scoreboard and work is in progress.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

181. **In paragraph 217, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the United Nations Office at Nairobi undertakes a comprehensive analysis of the costs incurred by the presence of 29 United Nations agencies and their staff outside the Gigiri compound.**

182. The 29 agencies located off site have their own administrative structures and it has been extremely difficult for United Nations Office at Nairobi to obtain information on costs incurred by these agencies and their staff. Only three agencies responded to requests for information on their accommodation costs. Under the circumstances, it may be impractical to pursue this recommendation.

Department responsible:	United Nations Office at Nairobi
Status:	Closure requested
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

183. **In paragraph 231, the Board recommended that the Administration develop strategies to reduce the vacancy rates of its conference centres.**

184. ECA had made the conditions for using the United Nations Conference Centre at Addis Ababa more flexible and has applied a more commercial management orientation over the past years. United Nations Conference Centre clientele now include not only organizations of the United Nations system but also the African Union Commission, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, States Members of the United Nations, professional organizations and selected national and international corporations. The centre's marketing activities include participation in high-profile international conventions and exhibitions, such as the Worldwide Exhibition for Incentive Travel, Meetings and Events (IMEX 2009) at Frankfurt, Germany, and the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA 2009) at Victoria, Canada. The centre now features in the annual publications and websites of these two global and well-known organizations in the conference and exhibitions market, as well as in "Meet in Africa", the member contact directory of the ICCA Africa Chapter. In addition to advertising in the Ethiopian Airlines in-flight magazine, the centre's website is regularly updated and some practical promotional tools such as brochures and handouts continue to be routinely distributed.

185. As far as the United Nations Office at Nairobi is concerned, the first phase of the renovation of the conference facilities, which entailed installation of audio/interpretation equipment and refurbishment of the furniture and fittings, was completed in February 2009. The second phase, which covers improving the surrounding conference areas and aesthetics, will commence in June 2010 with

minimum disruption of scheduled meetings. The modernization has resulted in increased use of the conference facilities, with interpretation utilization increasing from 55 per cent in 2008 to 69 per cent at the end of 2009. The number of meetings held increased by 68 per cent: from 2,571 meetings in the biennium 2006-2007, to 4,313 meetings in the biennium 2000-2009 after the renovation. In addition, the total meetings held in 2008 was 1,188 compared with 3,125 in 2009, more than double that of the prior year (163 per cent). The surge in the number of meetings held is expected to continue for some time, although it may not be at the same rate.

Department responsible:	United Nations Office at Geneva/United Nations Office at Nairobi
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

186. **In paragraph 236, the Board recommended that the Administration make the conditions for using the conference centres more flexible, monitor their occupation and develop their commercial management in accordance with the rules set by the Organization.**

187. For the response, see paragraph 184 above.

188. As mentioned in paragraph 185 above, as far as UNON is concerned, the first phase of the renovation of the conference facilities which entailed installation of audio/interpretation equipment and refurbishment of the furniture and fittings was completed in February 2009.

189. With respect to UNOG, the number of meetings held at or serviced by the United Nations Office at Geneva has continued to increase (8,660 in 2006; 9,045 in 2007; 9,122 in 2008; and 9,922 in 2009). The conference centre at the United Nations Office at Geneva is already being heavily booked owing to the overall increase in the conference servicing workload since 2006. Apart from the traditional regular calendar clients of the United Nations Office at Geneva, such as the Conference on Disarmament, UNCTAD and the Economic Commission for Europe, Division of Conference Management has had to accommodate, since 2006, the ever-increasing number of human rights conference activities resulting from the creation of the Human Rights Council, its machinery, including Universal Periodic Review, and the meetings of such newly established bodies in Geneva as the Committee on Migrant Workers, the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture. The conference servicing legislation shows that the duration of several human rights conference activities will be extended during the next years. As an example, additional weeks of meetings are being planned to be serviced in respect of the Committee against Torture and its Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture.

190. In addition to the above-mentioned regular calendar activities, conference rooms and conference services are provided to several extrabudgetary clients such as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, United Nations programmes, specialized agencies and to other ad hoc bodies, including those

created in the political field of activities (such as the Geneva Discussions). These meetings are accommodated and serviced on a fully reimbursable basis and only if there are spare conference facilities left and capacity can be made available through the recruitment of conference servicing staff from the local freelance market. Therefore, the idea of opening the United Nations Office at Geneva conference centre to other, additional non-calendar clients is currently not a feasible option, given the high demand to accommodate and service all the regular budget clients, including the human rights treaty bodies, and the forthcoming additional human rights conference activities.

191. The United Nations Office at Geneva Division of Conference Management has established a Monitoring, Evaluation, Risk Management and Statistical Verification Section to, inter alia, monitor efficient utilization of resources, including conference facilities.

Department responsible:	United Nations Office at Geneva/United Nations Office at Nairobi/Economic Commission for Africa
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

192. **In paragraph 239, the Board recommended that the Administration:**

(a) **Carry out a systematic assessment of the equipment for the conference centres in order to plan for its progressive replacement;**

(b) **Examine the suitability of the conference centres and draw up a multi-year equipment renovation plan.**

193. The Department of Conference Services at the United Nations Office at Nairobi conducted a complete inventory of its assets in March 2010. It established the life cycle of each category of assets and developed a capital replacement plan which will form the basis for budgeting their maintenance and replacement at current cost. With respect to the second recommendation, the United Nations Office at Nairobi will closely monitor utilization of the existing facilities in the next few years and assess the need for future expansion.

194. As far as the United Nations Office at Geneva is concerned, there are 21 conference rooms with conference equipment. In 2001 a plan for their renewal was established. By the end of 2007, 15 of the 21 rooms had been fully renovated and upgraded; by the end of the biennium 2008-2009 an additional two were completed bringing it to a total of 17 rooms out of 21. By the end of the biennium 2010-2011 one more conference room will be renovated and upgraded, bringing the total to 18 out of 21. The upgrading and refurbishing of the last three conference rooms (XVII, XVIII and XIX) will depend on the availability of funds.

Department responsible:	United Nations Office at Geneva/United Nations Office at Nairobi
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

195. **In paragraph 250, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it ensure that the Office of Human Resources Management carries out a proactive advertising policy for unrepresented and underrepresented countries.**

196. In addition to the proactive outreach effort, the Office of Human Resources Management has also produced an outreach video designed to garner interest in the Organization. That video has been placed on YouTube and provides information on where potential candidates can apply for vacancies. Using social media, it is anticipated that potential candidates, including those from unrepresented and underrepresented countries will be attracted to the Organization and will apply for positions.

197. During the course of 2010, outreach missions to unrepresented and underrepresented Member States have taken or will take place including, Spain, the Dominican Republic, the United States of America, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Norway and Finland, among others.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

198. **In paragraph 257, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the Office of Human Resources Management implements measures to reduce the actual duration for implementing the competitive examinations.**

199. The national competitive recruitment examination (NCRE) will be offered on 1 December 2010. Lean Six Sigma process was initiated to review the entire examination process and it has formed the basis for the proposal for the Young Professionals Programme, which is being presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session.

200. The NCRE will be offered in eight occupational groups in 2010. Currently, the entire system is under re-evaluation and the Office of Human Resources Management continues its efforts with regard to its proposal on the Young Professionals Programme. The elements of the proposal have been shared with a number of Member States and a report on the subject is being prepared for consideration by the General Assembly.

201. The 2010 NCRE was delayed as the Office of Human Resources Management conducted a thorough review of the business process of NCRE, pursuant to General

Assembly resolution 63/250 (section IV, para. 6). The review covered various elements of the process, such as preparation and marking of examinations, convocation of candidates, determination of occupational groups and the number of candidates to be placed on the roster, and selection of candidates from the roster. Recommendations stemming from the review are being implemented in the 2010 NCRE.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

202. **In paragraph 261, the Board recommended that the Administration implement measures to ensure it is in compliance with resolution 2 (I) of February 1946 and, in that respect consider, inter alia, making it a requirement that new entrants at the Professional level and above who are not fluent in both working languages undergo language tutoring upon joining the Administration.**

203. The General Assembly, in its resolution 63/246 A, second preambular paragraph, recalled all its resolutions related to the languages of the United Nations as well as those on human resources management. Furthermore, in paragraph 9 of the same resolution, the Assembly stressed that the employment of staff shall continue to be carried out in strict accordance with Article 101 of the Charter of the United Nations and in line with the relevant provisions of its resolutions. On that basis, the Administration believes that this recommendation was overtaken by events.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Overtaken by events
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

204. **In paragraph 262, the Board also recommended that the Administration test the fluency in both working languages of all new entrants at the Professional level and above after a period of time from their entry on duty.**

205. See comments (para. 202 above) in response to the Board's recommendation contained in paragraph 261.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Overtaken by events
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

206. **In paragraph 304, the Board also recommended that the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management strengthen its procedures for controlling rules applicable to the recruitment of retirees from the Organization, in particular those relating to the remuneration threshold.**

207. The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management does not have the capability or any means to monitor the earnings of retirees as they can work for any other United Nations entity, for which DGACM has no access to earnings information. Currently, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management monitors all short-term and contractual earnings for work done at United Nations Headquarters, and terms appear in every contract clearly advising the current policy and warning about the recovery of any earnings in excess of existing limits. The enterprise resource planning will provide the necessary capability which should allow tracking throughout the Secretariat when fully implemented.

Department responsible:	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	To be determined

208. **In paragraph 316, the Board recommended that the Administration document the entire architecture of systems and data that it uses to indicate all interfaces and exchanges of data between systems, their nature and the documents on all associated controls.**

209. The Umoja architecture team and data resources undertook the following tasks related to systems architecture and interfaces during 2009: (a) collected data for the as-is applications across the entire United Nations Secretariat and peacekeeping operations, as well as the agencies and funds under the United Nations umbrella; (b) shared and validated the information with information technology resources and systems owners worldwide; (c) developed a high-level physical diagram of priority systems to be replaced by Umoja and the current interfaces.

210. Within this context, Umoja worked closely with the Office of Information and Communications Technology and the Department of Field Service Communications and Information Technology Service to ensure that the systems inventory includes not just systems impacted by Umoja but all existing applications. The information was collated from the following sources: Office of Information and Communications Technology survey; information technology catalogue; eAsset; information gathered during Umoja enterprise resource planning as-is analysis missions; survey of information technology managers; Office of Information and Communications Technology internal inventory; capital master plan survey; ongoing Umoja input from subject matter experts and applications owners, workshops, missions; and structural review team. Approximately 1,800 systems were documented through this exercise.

211. In addition, the Umoja team met with both functional and technical resources supporting/developing the various existing systems to discuss integration/interfaces with Umoja.

212. Integration with the other primary enterprise systems (enterprise content management/customer resource management) has been discussed but is on hold pending widespread implementation of these two systems. As a next logical step in the design, Umoja is in the process of rationalizing the internal SAP architecture that is required for integration within SAP systems. The finalization of the SAP architecture is dependent on decisions relating to scope and business process that are currently being addressed as part of the Umoja design. The Umoja plan has specified that the SAP integration architecture design will be completed in line with the commencement of the Umoja build phase.

Department responsible:	Office of Information and Communications Technology
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2013

213. **In paragraph 328, the Board recommended that the Administration carry out regular checks, at least once a year, to identify any information technology active user accounts assigned to staff who have left the United Nations.**

214. Implementation of this recommendation was started with the enterprise identity management system project. The first phase of that project, which consists of the creation of a consolidated, authoritative repository of identities from United Nations Headquarters, selected United Nations agencies and three field missions, has been implemented. Using the data in that system's repository, it is possible to identify the staff and consultants separated within a specified period of time. The repository has been expanded with staff from four offices away from Headquarters. It is estimated to have all offices away from Headquarters included by the end of 2010. Adding consultants into the repository depends on the collaboration of the Department of Safety and Security in installing additional hardware at each office away from Headquarters, which will take a significant amount of time. A test has been performed with data from additional Department of Field Support missions and it has been estimated that by the end of June 2011 six more Department of Field Support missions will be completed.

215. The software acquisition was completed in May 2010 and the implementation of the directory server and other identity management components is ongoing but has been postponed because of delays in acquiring support for the software and the unavailability of the production environment owing to data centre migration. It should be noted that the full implementation of this recommendation will require the active collaboration of the relevant departments.

Department responsible:	Office of Information and Communications Technology
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Second quarter of 2011

216. **In paragraph 356, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the United Nations Office at Nairobi implements the recommendations of OIOS more rapidly by entering into service agreements with all of the United Nations agencies and making the provision of further services contingent upon a formal promise to settle payments in arrears for over six months.**

217. Service-level agreements are signed and updated regularly for services provided. UNON receives commitment from participating agencies on the services they wish to subscribe to on an annual basis. The Common Services Board, the inter-agency common services body in Nairobi, adopted a policy and procedures to be applied for the collection of arrears and the withdrawal of services in cases of systematic non-payment. UNON continues to work directly with the other agencies and through the Common Services Governance structure to effect timely collection of payments. It also periodically withdraws services from agencies/offices that have significantly overdue accounts and fail to respond to our requests for settlement.

Department responsible:	Office in Nairobi
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

218. **In paragraph 360, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the United Nations Office at Nairobi maintains its capacity to offer common services to other United Nations entities and obtains fair compensation for them.**

219. All common services are cost shared. Annual Common Services budgets are approved by all participating agencies.

Department responsible:	Office in Nairobi
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

220. **In paragraph 364, the Board also recommended that the Administration envisage that the United Nations Office at Vienna identifies its management costs and their breakdown between it and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.**

Department responsible:	Office in Vienna
Status:	Not accepted
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

221. **In paragraph 369, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation that it specify in the statement of ex gratia payments to which account the payments are posted.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

222. **In paragraph 376, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the standard reports on cases of fraud and presumptive fraud submitted to the Board contain sufficient detail to allow for a proper analysis.**

223. Since the format of the reports provided to the Board was developed, approved and provided by the Board itself, the Board may wish to clarify what further details may be needed to allow for proper analysis. In the meantime, Offices have been requested to provide reports that are filled out in a comprehensive manner — including any relevant details. The Administration believes that this recommendation has been implemented.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

Report of the Board for the biennium 2004-2005

224. **In paragraph 185, the Board recommended that the Administration ensure that the managers of the various services at Headquarters and at offices away from Headquarters improve their recordkeeping of non-expendable property, which should be supported by periodic physical inventory.**

225. The Administration maintains that, although the capital master plan and related relocation of the Secretariat has disrupted normal operations, procedures are in place at United Nations Headquarters and inventory records are supported by central physical inventories. The next physical inventory will be conducted in 2010 at the completion of the asset relocation and disposal actions necessitated by the capital master plan.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

III. Capital master plan

A. Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Board of Auditors on the capital master plan for the year ended 31 December 2009

Overview

226. Set out below is the information requested by the General Assembly on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the report of the Board of Auditors on the capital master plan for the year ended 31 December 2009.[4] As indicated in the summary of the present report, most of the Administration's comments have already been included in the Board's report; thus, additional comments are provided below only where required.

227. Tables 4 and 5 below summarize the status of implementation of recommendations as at August 2010.

Table 4
Status of implementation of main recommendations

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Implemented*	*In progress*	*Target date set*	*No target date*
Department of Management	8	4	4	4	0
Total	**8**	**4**	**4**	**4**	**0**

228. Of the eight main recommendations referred to in table 4 above, two are targeted for implementation by the first quarter of 2011 and two thereafter.

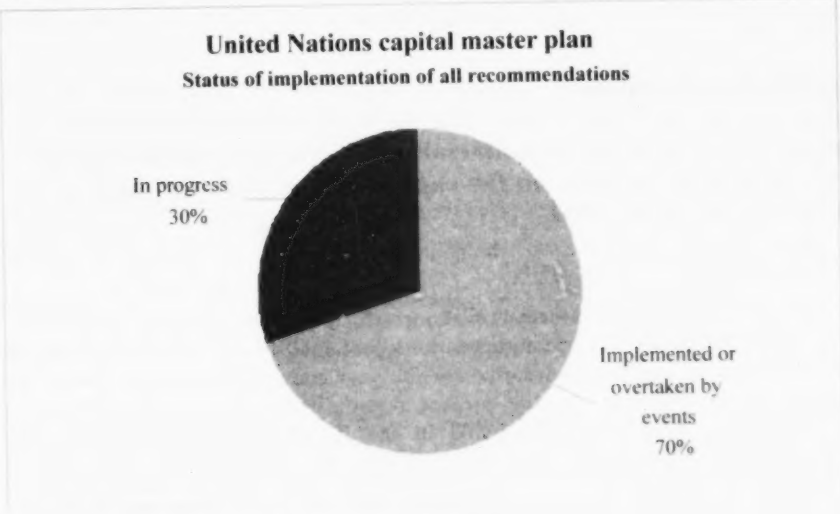
Table 5
Status of implementation of all recommendations

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Implemented*	*In progress*	*Target date set*	*No target date*
Department of Management	20	14	6	6	0
Total	**20**	**14**	**6**	**6**	**0**

[4] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 5* (A/65/5), vol. V.

229. As indicated in table 5, 14 (70 per cent) recommendations have already been implemented and the implementation of 6 (30 per cent) recommendations is in progress (see also figure IV below).

Figure IV



Detailed information on implementation status

230. **In paragraph 31, the Board recommended that the Administration refine its donations policy so as to clarify the status of past sponsorships.**

231. The donations policy stipulates that as a general principle, Member States that have already made a donation in respect of a particular space in the past will continue to have priority over that space. In this respect this recommendation is considered implemented.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

232. **In paragraph 43, the Board recommended that the Secretariat review the list and the value of the unliquidated obligations for future periods corresponding to rent associated with the capital master plan.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

233. **In paragraph 44, the Board recommended that the Secretariat conduct a thorough review of rent partition between the capital master plan fund and other funds.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

234. **In paragraph 51, the Board recommended that the Administration include in its progress report on the implementation of the capital master plan a detailed analysis of the trends in the total cost of the project and their causes.**

235. This recommendation will be fully implemented in the context of the eighth annual progress report.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

236. **In paragraph 57, the Board reiterated its previous recommendation that the Administration detail the economic assumptions used to arrive at the cost estimate for the project and monitor the evolution of those assumptions and their consequences for the project.**

237. The identified strategy is that of multiple guaranteed maximum price contracts, which allow the Administration to take advantage of the beneficial market conditions, locking in low prices as quickly as possible, without requiring the contractor to assume higher future risks and the related risk premium which would manifest itself in higher bids.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

238. **In paragraph 62, the Board recommended that the Administration reassess the merits of the value engineering programme.**

239. The Administration will take into account anticipated costs and benefits when conducting any additional extensive value engineering exercise.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2013

240. **In paragraph 67, the Board recommended that the Administration reduce to a strict minimum requests for change orders, particularly by its own services.**

241. Change orders will continue to be monitored until the capital master plan has been implemented.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Third quarter of 2013

242. **In paragraph 73, the Board recommended that the Administration:**

(a) **Establish a typology of the principal causes of construction cost overruns, especially for change orders;**

(b) **Using that typology, evaluate the financial volume of each category of change order.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

243. **In paragraph 79, the Board reiterated its previous recommendation that the Administration distinguish between the provision for contingencies and that for forward pricing escalation, as was done in the previous presentation of the cost estimate for the project.**

244. The Administration has accepted and implemented this recommendation. A portion of the contingency has been assigned to inflation. Whereas contingency was previously calculated at 10 per cent on signed guaranteed maximum price contracts and 20 per cent on unsigned guaranteed maximum price contracts in the fall of

2009, some modifications were made that reflect the status of the project as well as the recommendations by the Board. Currently, the contingency budget is calculated at 10 per cent for these contracts signed but not yet completed, and 15 per cent for as of yet unsigned contracts. The 15 per cent includes a provision for future escalation, as recommended by the Board of Auditors.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

245. **In paragraph 84, the Board recommended that the Administration reassess the appropriateness of the scope and the level of the provision for contingencies.**

246. See the comments regarding the preceding recommendation.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

247. **In paragraph 87, the Board recommended that the Administration extend the scope of the provision for forward price escalation to include professional fees and management costs.**

248. The Administration concurs with, and has implemented, the recommendation contained in paragraph 87. The escalation costs have been included in the fee projections. The Administration would also like to note that the escalation clause was a practical and cost-effective solution to the potential problem of fee changes on a long-term project. With regard to management costs, the capital master plan project staff consists of only 25 positions, therefore salary increases will have a minimal impact, which is likely to be more than offset by the occasional turnover of staff, resulting in savings due to short-term vacancies (delayed recruitment factor).

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

249. **In paragraph 99, the Board reiterated its previous recommendation that the Administration make provision for delays in the schedule of the project and continue to consider ways to mitigate such delays.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

250. **In paragraph 102, the Board recommended that the Administration quickly define once and for all the main measures relating to the refurbishment of workspaces.**

251. The capital master plan is having ongoing discussion with the department heads to finalize the restacking plan for the Secretariat.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	First quarter of 2011

252. **In paragraph 104, the Board recommended that the Administration perform a cost/benefit analysis for the gradual move back into part of the Secretariat Building and to confirm the project only if it does not compromise the schedule for completion.**

253. The Administration agrees and has implemented this recommendation. The Administration undertook an analysis which led to the conclusion that the plans for the re-occupancy of the Secretariat Building will not compromise the schedule for the completion of the project. The Administration can accommodate approximately 200 moves per weekend and accordingly, the restacking of the Secretariat will require at least five months, taking into account the occasional requirement to suspend moves during some weekends. The planned relocation into the Secretariat Building will not impact or complicate the construction activity, nor will it negatively affect the completion date of the project.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

254. **In paragraph 110, the Board recommended that the Administration perform a cost/benefit analysis on postponing negotiations on contracts related to the Conference Building and preparation of the worksite.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Fourth quarter of 2010

255. **In paragraph 112, the Board recommended that the Administration immediately take appropriate measures to prevent any functional change in the project relating to the Conference Building after the signing of the work contracts.**

256. A detailed review of all design documents is held with each user department prior to the onset of the construction work.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

257. **In paragraph 115, the Board recommended that the Administration perform a cost/benefit analysis on postponing negotiations on the contracts relating to the General Assembly Building.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

258. **In paragraph 118, the Board recommended that the Administration reduce to a strict minimum requests for change orders with regard to the use and configuration of basement rooms.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	First quarter of 2011

259. **In paragraph 129, the Board recommended that the Administration expedite the functioning of the post-award review committee.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

260. **In paragraph 147, the Board recommended that the Administration improve the management of the files for the amendments:**

(a) **By systematically including information on the negotiation process with the vendor, the results thereof, the exact nature of the work and its location;**

(b) **By enhancing the format of the cover note on the requests for amendments so as to give the decision makers a clear understanding of the purpose and the authors of the requests.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

B. Implementation of the recommendations contained in the reports of the Board of Auditors on the capital master plan for prior years

Overview

261. In paragraph 9 of its resolution 64/227, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide full explanation for delays in implementation of the recommendations of the Board for prior periods, in particular those recommendations not yet fully implemented which are two or more years old.

262. In the annex to its report for the year ended 31 December 2009, the Board provided a summary of the status of implementation of recommendations for the year ended 31 December 2008. Information is provided below on the eight recommendations indicated as "under implementation" or "not implemented" in the annex, set out in the order in which the recommendations were presented.

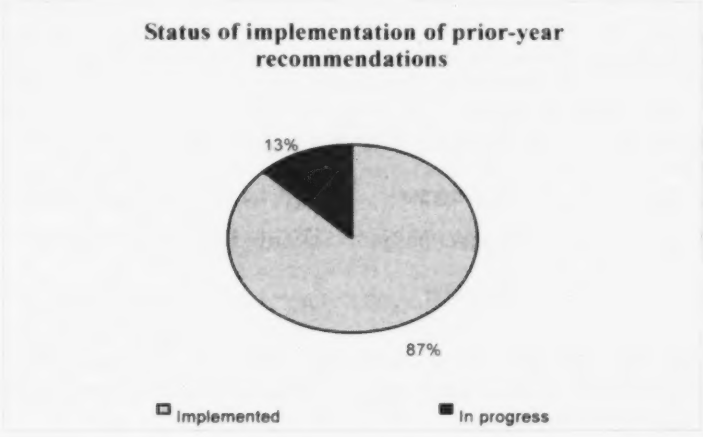
263. Table 6 summarizes the overall situation.

Table 6
Status of the implementation of recommendations relating to recommendations for the year ended 31 December 2008

Department responsible	*Number of recommendations*	*Implemented*	*In progress*	*No target date*
Department of Management	8	7	1	1
Total	**8**	**7**	**1**	**1**

264. As indicated in table 6 and figure V, the Administration has undertaken a concerted effort to ensure that all recommendations of the audit bodies are implemented in a timely manner. Of the eight recommendations, seven (87 per cent) have been implemented and one (13 per cent) is in progress. The recommendation shown as "in progress" has no target date because its implementation is ongoing and will continue to be monitored by the Administration.

Figure V



Detailed information on implementation status

Report of the Board for the year ended 31 December 2008[5]

265. **In paragraph 55, the Board recommended that the Administration distinguish between the provision for contingencies and that for forward pricing escalation, as was done in the previous presentation of the cost estimate for the project.**

266. The Administration's response to paragraph 79 of the Board of Auditor's report (see para. 243 above) is contained in paragraph 244 above.

[5] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 5* (A/64/5), vol. V.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

267. **In paragraph 78, the Board recommended that the Administration make provision for delays in the schedule of the project and continue to consider ways to mitigate delays.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

268. **In paragraph 90, the Administration agreed with the Board's recommendation to oversee strict compliance by the construction manager with its obligations.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	In progress
Priority:	High
Target date:	Ongoing

269. **In paragraph 92, the Board recommended that the Administration expedite the relocation of all staff to avoid aggravating the delay in the start of the work on the Secretariat Building.**

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

270. **In paragraph 113, the Board recommended that the Administration take appropriate measures to regularize the transactions that occurred under the authority granted to the Director of the Procurement Division in accordance with the memorandum of the United Nations Controller and approved on 15 November 2007.**

271. As has been acknowledged by the Board, the Post-award Review Committee has been established to address this issue.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

272. **In paragraph 120, the Board recommended that the Administration consider ways and means to increase significantly the level of internal control over amendments to contracts relating to the capital master plan.**

273. See the response to the recommendation above.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

274. **In paragraph 121, the Board recommended that, as long as no ex post facto review procedure is secured, the Administration make every effort to involve the Headquarters Committee on Contracts in the adjudication process prior to signing or amending contracts that are within the scope of the authority of that Committee.**

275. See the response to the recommendation above.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	High
Target date:	Not applicable

Report of the Board for the year ended 31 December 2007[6]

276. **In paragraph 61 of the Board's report for 2009 (A/65/5, vol. V), the Board reiterated its recommendation that the Administration detail the economic assumptions used to arrive at the cost estimate for the project and monitor the evolution of those economic assumptions and their consequences for the project.**

[6] Ibid., *Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 5* (A/63/5), vol. V.

Department responsible:	Department of Management
Status:	Implemented
Priority:	Medium
Target date:	Not applicable

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Sixty-fifth session
Item 20 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/198, in which the Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-fifth session on the implementation of that resolution, as well as on the activities planned by the Secretary-General and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system for the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015. In the same resolution, the Assembly recalled its resolution 55/196, by which it had proclaimed 2003 the International Year of Freshwater, and its resolution 58/217, by which it proclaimed 2005-2015 the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", to commence on 22 March 2005; stated the goals of the Decade; and called upon the relevant United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies, regional commissions and other organizations of the United Nations system to deliver a coordinated response, utilizing existing resources and voluntary funds, to make 2005-2015 a decade of action. The present report outlines the activities that have been prepared for the midterm review of the Decade and provides recommendations to Member States on the way forward.

* A/65/150.

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I. Introduction

1. Recognizing that progress needed to be accelerated towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals related to water and sanitation, the General Assembly, in its resolution 58/217, proclaimed the period from 2005 to 2015 the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", to commence on 22 March 2005, and recalled its resolution 55/196, in which it had proclaimed the year 2003 the International Year of Freshwater.

2. In this regard, in its resolution 59/228, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixtieth session, a report on the activities that he and relevant organizations of the United Nations system had planned for the Decade. The report (A/60/158) was submitted to the Assembly but not discussed.

3. In its resolution 58/217, the General Assembly decided that the goals of the Decade should be achieving a greater focus on the implementation of water-related programmes and projects, while striving to ensure the participation and involvement of women in water-related development efforts, and the furtherance of cooperation at all levels, in order to help to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals.

4. In the same resolution, the General Assembly also called upon the relevant United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and other organizations of the United Nations system to deliver a coordinated response, utilizing existing resources and voluntary funds to make 2005-2015 truly a decade for action.

5. In its resolution 64/198, the General Assembly welcomed the activities related to the implementation of the first half of the Decade undertaken by Member States, the Secretariat and the organizations of the United Nations system, inter alia, through inter-agency work, as well as contributions from major groups, and emphasized the importance of further country-level implementation of the Decade.

6. In the same resolution, the General Assembly encouraged Member States, the Secretariat, organizations of the United Nations system, through their coordination mechanism, and major groups to continue their efforts to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals contained in Agenda 21,[1] the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,[2] the United Nations Millennium Declaration[3] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation").[4]

7. The United Nations Millennium Declaration committed Governments around the world to a clear agenda for combating poverty, hunger, illiteracy, disease, discrimination against women and environmental degradation. In the area of water resources, Heads of State and Government pledged in 2000 to reduce by half the proportion of people who were unable to reach, or to afford, safe drinking water by 2015 and to stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources.

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[2] General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

[3] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

8. Additional goals adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development are aimed at developing integrated water resource management and water efficiency plans by 2005 and at halving the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation by 2015.

9. The primary goal of the "Water for Life" Decade is to promote efforts to fulfil international commitments made on water and water-related issues by 2015 — is to be, in point of fact, a decade for action. The "Water for Life" Decade is the second international decade on water-related issues organized by the United Nations, succeeding the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, 1981-1990.

10. UN-Water, the United Nations system-wide mechanism for achieving coherence and coordination in the water-related activities of the relevant agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, was established in 2003 by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination through its High-level Committee on Programmes.

11. During the first half of the Decade, each country adopted its own approach to organizing activities in line with national development plans and policies and with regional and global agreements. For example, in the case of African countries, national water initiatives in the first half of the Decade have been guided by the African Ministerial Council on Water, which receives guidance from the African Union. At its request, the Council receives technical support and advice from the regional arm of UN-Water in Africa.

12. The present report, in support of the midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the Decade, provides information on the activities of the first half of the Decade and provides particulars available at the Decade's midpoint on some of the international, regional and national activities that are being planned for its second half.

II. Background

13. Public awareness of the importance of the use and management of freshwater resources for achieving sustainable development increased dramatically in recent years as a result of a number of ongoing international and national initiatives and activities that led up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002. Water and sanitation issues were high in the agenda of the Summit. The International Year of Freshwater, 2003, was well timed to follow up on recommendations for action on water and sanitation made at the Millennium Summit and the Johannesburg World Summit.

14. During the "Water for Life" Decade, special emphasis is being placed on ensuring the participation and involvement of women in water-related development efforts, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/198. The challenge of the Decade is to focus attention on action-oriented activities and policies that ensure the long-term sustainable management of water resources, in terms of both quantity and quality, and that include measures to improve sanitation. Achieving the goals of the Decade will require sustained commitment, cooperation and investment on the part of all stakeholders during its second half, extending from 2010 to 2015, and beyond.

III. Intergovernmental processes at the midpoint of the International Decade, "Water for Life"

15. In its resolution 58/217, the General Assembly had decided that the goals of the Decade should support the achievement of internationally agreed water-related goals contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and, as appropriate, those identified by the Commission on Sustainable Development.

16. At the eleventh session of the Commission on Sustainable Development held in 2003, the special themes selected for the first implementation cycle following the World Summit on Sustainable Development were water resources, sanitation and human settlements. The twelfth session, in 2004, provided an exhaustive review of the current state of implementation of policies and practices established to meet the internationally agreed goals in water and sanitation.

17. At its thirteenth session, in 2005, the Commission on Sustainable Development explored policy options for furthering implementation in respect of the issues of water and sanitation, as well as human settlements. In its resolution 13/1,[5] the Commission provided a framework within which Governments and the organizations of the United Nations system, working in partnership with major groups and other stakeholders, could take action in the areas of water and sanitation. Options were presented on access to basic water services; integrated water resources management; access to basic sanitation; sanitation and hygiene education; and waste-water collection, treatment and reuse.

18. In its resolution 13/1, the Commission on Sustainable Development also provided a range of measures for and approaches to addressing water, sanitation and human settlements in an integrated manner, taking into account economic, social and environmental aspects, related sectoral policies and cross-cutting issues, as identified at the Commission's eleventh session. A user-friendly matrix was developed in this process to highlight policy options, possible actions and case studies (available from http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd13/matrix.pdf). Both resolution 13/1 and the matrix were used as guidelines for action during the first half of the "Water for Life" Decade.

19. At its sixteenth sessions, the Commission on Sustainable Development reviewed the implementation of the decisions on water and sanitation and their interlinkages that had been taken by the Commission at its thirteenth session.

20. In 2010, as part of the midterm comprehensive review process for the Decade, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/198, the President of the Assembly held a high-level interactive dialogue on 22 March 2010, World Water Day. The dialogue began with a plenary session with opening statements and a video link to the World Water Day celebrations in Nairobi.

21. The plenary was followed by three successive panel discussions on the following themes: water and the internationally agreed development goals; water:

[5] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 9* (E/2005/29), chap. I.C.

climate change and disasters; and water and peace and security. The outcome was a non-negotiated summary by the President of the General Assembly.

22. In its resolution 64/198, the General Assembly had welcomed the generous offer of the Government of Tajikistan to host a high-level international conference on the midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the "Water for Life" Decade. The Government of Tajikistan hosted the Conference in Dushanbe from 8 to 10 June. Over 500 participants from 75 countries attended the Conference, which was opened by the Prime Minister and the President of Tajikistan.

23. Six round tables covered the following themes: (a) accelerating progress towards water-related internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and ensuring involvement of women; (b) transboundary water cooperation; (c) water quality; (d) water resources and adaptation to climate change and disaster risks reduction; (e) sustainable financing; and (f) integrated water resource management, energy, agriculture and food security.

24. The outcome of the Conference was the non-negotiated Dushanbe Declaration (see A/65/88, annex). The Declaration affirms that, among other messages, water is related to all the Millennium Development Goals, not only to Goal 7 (Ensure environmental sustainability), and that a multisectoral sustainable development approach should be taken in addressing water policy and action.

25. The Government of Tajikistan will submit the outcome of the High-level International Conference in Dushanbe to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session.

IV. Programmes and activities of the United Nations system

A. UN-Water[6]

26. During the first half of the "Water for Life" Decade, 2005-2009, UN-Water was the central coordinator for the activities of the organizations of the United Nations system. The UN-Water terms of reference and modalities of work cover the elements of a detailed inter-agency plan for addressing water and sanitation issues, and also include mechanisms for interacting with stakeholders that are not members of the United Nations system. The chairmanship of UN-Water, which rotates among its members, is currently held by the United Nations University, while the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat acts as its secretariat. Information on UN-Water can be found at http://www.unwater.org.

27. UN-Water has defined a number of thematic initiatives for its work over the Decade, which include: coping with water scarcity and pollution; sanitation, safe drinking water and health; gender mainstreaming in water and sanitation; integrated water resources management; transboundary water issues; and disaster risk reduction. Africa was selected as a geographical focus owing to its exceptional

[6] The work of UN-Water encompasses all aspects of freshwater, including surface water and groundwater resources and the interface between freshwater and seawater. The scope of work includes freshwater resources, in terms of both quality and quantity, their development, assessment, management, monitoring and use (including, for example, domestic uses, agriculture and ecosystem requirements); sanitation, including both access to and use of sanitation by populations and the interactions between sanitation and freshwater; and water-related disasters, emergencies and other extreme events and their impact on human security.

needs in respect of water and sanitation. A series of policy briefs have been released by UN-Water during the Decade reflecting its thematic initiatives.

28. One of the four programmes of UN-Water is the World Water Assessment Programme, hosted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which both provides the background assessment for and produces the *World Water Development Report* (see http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr/). The first edition of the report, entitled *Water for People, Water for Life*,[7] was launched at the Third World Water Forum, in Kyoto, Japan, in March 2003; the second edition, entitled *Water, A Shared Responsibility*,[8] was launched at the Fourth World Water Forum, in Mexico City, in March 2006; and the third edition, entitled *Water in a Changing World*,[9] was launched at the Fifth World Water Forum, in Istanbul, in March 2009. The fourth edition, entitled *Managing Water under Conditions of Uncertainty and Risk*, will be launched in 2012.

29. The UN-Water World Water Assessment Programme provides comprehensive information on and analysis of the current state of the world's water resources and potential policy solutions, bringing together relevant inputs from Governments, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and the private sector. Information on participation in the Programme is available at http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/index.shtml.

30. Two other UN-Water programmes were launched in the first half of the Decade: the Programme on Capacity Development, located in Bonn and hosted by the United Nations University, and the Programme on Advocacy and Communication, located in Zaragoza, Spain, and hosted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

31. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)/World Health Organization (WHO) Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation operates under the umbrella of UN-Water and has reported on a regular basis since 1991 on the status of water supply and sanitation (see sect. IV.D below).

32. A number of activities coordinated under UN-Water have cross-linkages with UN-Oceans, another water-oriented coordinating mechanism, which was also set up under the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to strengthen the coordination and cooperation of United Nations activities related to oceans and coastal areas. The cross-linkages between UN-Water and UN-Oceans include the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (see A/51/116, annex II) and activities for the benefit of small island developing States (see http://www.un-oceans.org). Linkages between UN-Water and UN-Energy are also developing, particularly in respect of the challenges emerging from the water-energy nexus.

B. Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation

33. The Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation was established by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in order to give advice, galvanize global action and raise

[7] Paris, UNESCO; and New York, Berghahn Books, 2003.
[8] Paris, UNESCO; and New York, Berghahn Books, 2006.
[9] Paris, UNESCO; and London, Earthscan, 2009.

awareness on water and sanitation issues; to help mobilize funds for water and sanitation projects; and to encourage new partnerships as part of international efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve the agreed development goals in water and sanitation.

34. The Advisory Board, chaired by Willem-Alexander, the Prince of Orange, is made up of a wide range of eminent persons, technical experts, stakeholders from civil society and other knowledgeable individuals with experience in inspiring people, moving the machinery of government and working with the media, the private sector and civil society.

35. UN-Water and the Advisory Board work closely in providing a coordinated response by the United Nations system, involving Member States and civil society. The Advisory Board is a UN-Water partner with special status. In 2010, the Board released the second version of its Hashimoto Action Plan (HAP II), in which it proposes policies, strategies and actions in five areas: financing; sanitation; monitoring and reporting; integrated water resources management; and water and disaster (see A/C.2/61/4, annex I, for the compendium of actions under the first Hashimoto Action Plan). The Advisory Board has signed agreements with regional development banks and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on agreed activities so as to ensure implementation of HAP II. The Advisory Board secretariat is hosted by the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. Further information is available at www.unsgab.org.

C. United Nations Inter-agency Task Force on Gender and Water

36. In 2003, the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality established the Inter-agency Task Force on Gender and Water, with the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs as task manager. UN-Water also supported the creation of the Task Force, thus linking gender focal points and water focal points in each agency. Currently the Task Force, which comprises 18 United Nations programmes and agencies, 5 non-United Nations entities and 2 observers, reports annually to the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and semi-annually to UN-Water, which, at its twelfth meeting of senior programme managers, reaffirmed gender and water as a cross-cutting strategic thematic priority area.

37. The Task Force had submitted a paper entitled "A gender perspective on water resources and sanitation" (background paper, No. 2 (DESA/DSD/2005/2); see http://www.un.water.org/downloads/bground_2.pdf) to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its thirteenth session, held in April 2005. The paper provided the content for much of the discussion on the cross-cutting issue of gender in water and sanitation. In 2008, in coordination with the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity-Building, the Task Force held an expert workshop on gender and water statistics, which produced several technical recommendations which were fed back into the United Nations statistical community.

D. Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation

38. WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) actively contribute to global water supply and sanitation monitoring and information dissemination

through their Joint Monitoring Programme, under the umbrella of UN-Water. Coverage figures produced by the Programme are the official reference data for the United Nations system, including with regard to the goals contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

39. In its latest report, released in March 2010, entitled *Progress in Sanitation and Drinking-water: 2010 Update*,[10] the Joint Monitoring Programme presented coverage data for most countries of the world as of 2008 (see www.wssinfo.org). The figures revealed the glaring contrasts between rich and poor nations and between rural and urban populations in the poorest countries.

40. For its coverage estimates, the Joint Monitoring Programme uses nationally representative household surveys such as the demographic and health survey, the UNICEF multiple indicator cluster surveys and the WHO global health survey, as well as other reliable country surveys and national censuses that allow for the comparison of data. The initial database had provided country, global and regional coverage estimates, disaggregated by service type and by urban and rural areas, for 1990 and 2002. The 2006 report updated coverage estimates to 2004 as a baseline for the "Water for Life" Decade.

E. Global Annual Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water

41. The UN-Water Global Annual Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water reports on the capacity of countries to make progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goal on water and sanitation and on the effectiveness of external support agencies in facilitating this process. The first UN-Water Global Annual Assessment on Sanitation and Drinking Water, entitled *Targeting Resources for Better Results*[11] was launched in March 2010. The Assessment was designed to reduce the reporting burden and harmonize different reporting mechanisms of the Member States of the Organization. The Assessment also increases the comprehensiveness and accountability of information on the drinking water and sanitation sectors. This initiative is technically coordinated by WHO.

F. United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

42. The aim of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction is to mobilize Governments, United Nations organizations, regional bodies, the private sector and civil society so that they can unite in their efforts to build resilient societies by developing a culture of prevention and preparedness. The "Water for Life" Decade has the same time frame as the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,[12] adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Japan, in 2005. Such synergy provides a unique opportunity for the strengthening of understanding regarding how the management of risk related to disasters should be linked to water resources management.

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[10] Geneva, 2010.

[11] Geneva, WHO, 2010.

[12] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 1.

V. Regional initiatives

43. UN-Water, which includes the secretariats of all five United Nations regional commissions as members, encourages regional inter-agency networking arrangements between the regional commissions and regional offices of the various United Nations organizations. The first regional UN-Water initiative was established by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), which has been developing a workplan of activities for UN-Water/Africa. UN-Water is strengthening its work within the regional dimension by establishing a Task Force on Regional-level Coordination in 2010.

A. Economic Commission for Africa

44. Although Africa's share of global freshwater resources (10 per cent) closely matches its share of world population (12 per cent), the distribution of the resources is uneven, encompassing areas of severe aridity, such as the Sahara and Sahel in the north and the Kalahari in the south, and areas of abundant water resources, such as the Congo basin, which is estimated to have 50 per cent of Africa's freshwater. The continent suffers from one of the most unstable rainfall regimes in the world. The extremes of shortage and excess of water result in different forms of socio-economic insecurity.

45. In the field of water policy, strategy and institutional arrangements, a number of advances have been made in African countries. There is an increasing commitment to water policy reform and a strong trend towards decentralization of water institutions. The main goal of UN-Water in Africa is to ensure coherence and foster joint action by all United Nations organizations active in the water sector in Africa, particularly during the "Water for Life" Decade. The main activities under the UN-Water work programme in Africa are:

(a) Advocacy for raising the profile of water issues targeted towards policymakers: UN-Water organized the Pan African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water under the auspices of the African Ministerial Council on Water in Addis Ababa in December 2003, at which Africa's priority implementation needs and required actions were defined. The major outcomes formed the basis of the work programme of many African countries in water and sanitation. Detailed information is available at www.uneca.org/awich;

(b) Monitoring of progress in implementing regional and global programmes: UN-Water initiated the publication of an "African water development report", based on reports at the basin and the national and subregional levels. A final version of the report, covering 30 countries, was released in September 2005. A regional report is being prepared as part of the fourth World Water Development Report;

(c) Improving access to information on African water resources: UN-Water has set up the African Water Information Clearing House, a continent-wide information system backstopped by subregional networks of water and geo-information specialists and institutions.

46. With Africa designated as the geographical focus of UN-Water, the activities described above are expected to make a significant contribution to improving the development and utilization of Africa's water resources for socio-economic

development, and thus to facilitating progress in reaching the goals of the "Water for Life" Decade.

B. Economic Commission for Europe

47. Integrated water resources management in the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region, with its more than 150 major transboundary rivers, over 100 transboundary groundwater aquifers and about 30 international lakes, requires joint action among the countries that share basins, including the establishment of joint bodies such as river commissions. In February 2005, at the sixtieth annual session of ECE, a framework for policies, strategies and action on water and sanitation covering the period up to 2015 was agreed upon. The policies and actions that form the response of the Commission to the challenges of the Decade are based on its 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the two Protocols thereto, on water and health and on civil liability for damage caused by industrial accidents. These regional legal instruments set goals and tasks for the countries and institutions that are responsible for integrated water resources management in a transboundary context. The provisions of the European Union (EU) water framework directive and some 150 bilateral and multilateral agreements supplement these instruments.

48. The contributions of ECE to the Decade include research and capacity-building support in such technical areas as flood management, protection of water-related ecosystems, groundwater management, and monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters. Activities in these areas were carried out in cooperation with, inter alia, UNESCO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), WHO, and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention).[13]

C. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

49. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) conducts research and disseminates information on the economic and institutional aspects of water resources management in the countries of the Latin America and the Caribbean region. It also provides advice on water legislation and regulation of water utilities and cooperates with a number of global and regional projects, such as the Global Water Partnership and Visión Andina del Agua in assessing the impact of trade and investment agreements on water and water utilities.

50. ECLAC publishes the newsletter of the Network for Cooperation in Integrated Water Resource Management for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean twice a year, in English and Spanish. Organizations involved in the technical network include private and public water resources management institutions. The Network's goal is to improve the capacity for multiple-use management of water resources in diverse dimensions (institutional, administrative, economic-financial, legal and technical), through exchange of information and direct cooperation among its

[13] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 996, No. 14583.

members. (More information on the Network and the Commission's work programme and publications on water resources can be found at http://www.eclac.cl/drni/.)

D. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

51. The Asia and the Pacific region is home to more than two thirds of the world's population and, on average, over 80 per cent of deaths caused by natural disasters annually takes place in the region. As part of its activities related to the "Water for Life" Decade, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific initiated two major programmes in 2004 and 2005. One entails the application of strategic planning and management to assist developing countries in the preparation of integrated water resources management plans, with emphasis on eradicating poverty and meeting the goals of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the other entails integrating disaster risk management into water resources management.

52. The programme on integrated water resources management builds on the results of case studies in 17 developing countries that applied the guidelines on strategic planning and management of water resources developed earlier by the Commission. The case studies were carried out in 2003 and 2004 as part of a regional project funded through the Development Account. This programme supports the implementation of the integrated water resources management component of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation within the framework of the "Water for Life" Decade.

53. The programme on water-related disaster risk management links the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action to the "Water for Life" Decade. The programme builds on the Commission's existing subregional networks on hydrology, meteorology and disaster risk management. The integration of disaster risk management into the management of water resources encompasses improvements in multi-hazard mapping and warning systems and the enhancement of disaster preparedness at the local, national and regional levels, as well as the promotion of community-based disaster risk management practices. The region's developed and developing countries are learning from one another's experiences through, for example, the annual hydrologic workshops of the Typhoon Committee.

E. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

54. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) region has always experienced a low level of natural water availability, especially in arid and extremely arid climatic zones. Rapid population growth, unsustainable water use and increasing pollution levels further contribute to water scarcity problems in the region. Moreover, most water resources used in the ESCWA region, both surface water and groundwater, are shared by several riparian countries.

55. To address these challenges, the Commission initiated several activities in 2004 and 2005 as part of preparations for the "Water for Life" Decade, mainly in building capacity for shared water resources management and integrated water resources management. A training manual for the region was prepared, addressing the integration of water policies, institutional and legislative tools and the administrative methods required for integrated water resources management.

56. On the issue of shared water resources, several pilot areas (relating to surface water and groundwater resources) were studied to serve as models with respect to reaching agreements on sharing resources and promoting joint technical and managerial cooperation among the riparian countries. A series of workshops were held to assist member States in enhancing their negotiation capacity and skills and promoting conflict resolution in the region. The Commission also focused on the sustainable management of shared groundwater resources, especially in the many countries where groundwater is the main source of water. Emphasis has been placed on integrating specific policies for groundwater management into policies at the basin level.

VI. Assistance to country programmes

57. The coherence of the actions of the United Nations system at the country level is crucial to achieving the overall objectives of the "Water for Life" Decade. UN-Water is encouraging exchanges of information and dialogue on policymaking on water and sanitation issues within the United Nations system and with external partners and stakeholders. Such cooperation is essential in efforts to incorporate the water agenda into country-level exercises and processes such as the common country assessment, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and poverty reduction strategy papers.

58. As part of the actions taken for the "Water for Life" Decade, UNDP and the World Bank have engaged in a joint initiative to identify a few key areas in the water and sanitation sector, where the two organizations would benefit from closer collaboration. The focus of the work is on the need to support countries in scaling up their efforts to reach the water and sanitation targets.

59. The UNDP Water Governance Programme and the World Bank Water and Sanitation Programme are working together to develop rural and urban initiatives in the area of water supply and sanitation. Both programmes can influence large-scale investments in the direction of focusing more on poverty-reduction targets and encouraging the participation of local-level stakeholders in decision-making processes so as to ensure more equitable distribution of investment benefits. Both Programmes promote governance (policy, legal, regulatory and institutional reform) and build capacities at the national and local levels, and both provide similar structures for service delivery, including regional and country offices.

60. UNDP places poverty eradication at the centre of its work on water supply, sanitation and human settlements, with an overall investment of over $400 million in grants. Through this work, UNDP, with a variety of partners, has produced replicable results in respect of providing access to affordable drinking water and sanitation to the poor in peri-urban and rural areas. The Water Governance Programme focuses on addressing local capacity constraints in order to improve access to water and sanitation and operates at the local and national levels.

61. At the national level, UNDP facilitates communication and coordination among the multiple actors dealing with water resources. UNDP and its partners have been facilitating country-level action geared towards the preparation of plans for integrated water resources management and for promoting the participation of multiple stakeholders in the implementation of water resources management practices.

62. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat provides policy advice at the national level, particularly through its technical advisory services, to developing countries, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States, on strengthening institutional capacity to develop integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans, and in so doing, encourages the participation of all stakeholders.

63. As part of its activities for the "Water for Life" Decade, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has developed training materials for users at all levels designed to promote better use of water in agriculture. Areas covered include educational approaches aimed at farmers and farm communities; technical materials for irrigation professionals; irrigation scheme management training courses; and policy advice in agricultural water management. In addition, FAO is promoting more sustainable agricultural practices, with a view to reducing negative environmental impacts and water pollution, through its integrated plant-nutrient and pest-management programmes. These practices are applied in member countries through technical assistance and South-South cooperation programmes and projects.

64. UNICEF continues to expand its water, sanitation and hygiene programmes, supporting, in some 93 countries, activities ranging from national policy development to direct support for improved service delivery in focus areas. UNICEF interventions focus on expanding programmes that promote improved hygiene and sanitation, while maintaining support for improved water-supply services.

65. UNICEF supported water, sanitation and hygiene education programmes for schools in some 76 countries in the first half of the Decade and plans to expand the programmes during the second half of the Decade. Components include hygiene education and teacher education in hygiene in primary schools; construction of new water and sanitation facilities in schools; developing and promoting child- and girl-friendly facility designs; and promoting hygienic behaviour change in communities.

66. WHO, working with its partners, is developing a suite of tools with which to assist countries in assessing the health impacts of water and sanitation and to assess the costs and impacts (both health and non-health) of policy and technical alternatives for supporting and informing intersectoral policy dialogue. The tools were launched during the first year of the Decade and are being progressively updated and expanded as the Decade progresses.

VII. Communications strategy

67. The "Water for Life" Decade draws on much of the work initiated during the International Year of Freshwater, 2003, and provides an opportunity to maintain momentum on freshwater issues. In this regard, strategic communications and coordination are crucial for the coherence and success of such efforts.

68. To support the launch of the Decade in March 2005, key messages, drafted by UN-Water in conjunction with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, were circulated for discussion at a meeting of the United Nations Communications Group, which is composed of communications focal points within all United Nations organizations. Materials that were developed to support the initial launch of the Decade include a logo, a website and educational

and audio-visual materials. In the second half of the Decade, responsibility for supporting communication and outreach activities of UN-Water and its members will fall increasingly upon the UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication, based in Zaragoza.

69. The UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication has organized a series of catalytic communications initiatives, including: the UN-Water pavilion at the Zaragoza Expo 2008; support to the UN-Water exhibit at the World Water Forum in Istanbul in 2009, coordinated by the UN-Water secretariat and FAO; the annual World Water Week in Stockholm; an International Media Consultation on Water and Climate Change and the First International Conference of the Global Water Operators' Partnership Alliance in Zaragoza in 2009; and a joint event for African water officials on water and cooperation in Africa with the Spanish fund Casa Africa in Gran Canary Island. In 2010, the Programme on Advocacy and Communication provided support to the organization of World Water Day (led by UNEP), having as its theme water quality, by developing a travel exhibition on water quality specially adapted to the case of sub-Saharan Africa; a series of lectures on water quality around the world under an agreement with the Cervantes Cultural Institute; a workshop for international journalists on water quality in Nairobi; and an event in Zaragoza on "Clean water for a healthy world". Also during World Water Day, the Programme on Advocacy and Communication launched the Water Smart Campaign, a communications initiative aimed at providing water operators with different means of implementing communication and awareness-raising campaigns on water- and sanitation-related issues.

70. The Programme has also mapped out landmark water events over the next 30 months in the lead-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in 2012.

A. Logo

71. The logo for the International "Water for Life" Decade, 2005-2015, was chosen by UN-Water from several designs submitted by the Department of Public Information and an independent designer working on a pro bono basis. The chosen logo, submitted by the independent designer, is shown below.

72. The design was submitted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to the Publications Board of the Department of Public Information in January 2005. The decision on the logo was approved by consensus through e-mail correspondence among the members of the Logo Approval Committee. The logo is intended to be

used by UN-Water members, programmes and other United Nations entities on all United Nations publications and promotional materials pertaining to the Decade and can also be used by outside parties who seek permission through the online interactive form.

B. Website

73. The official website for the "Water for Life" Decade (www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/) was launched on 22 March 2005. Work is currently under way to improve content in all official United Nations languages. The website, managed by the UN-Water Decade Programme on Advocacy and Communication, is housed and maintained at United Nations Headquarters by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in consultation with the Department of Public Information. Links to all the other member organizations of UN-Water are included. The website is used as an awareness-raising tool and a clearing house for the presentation of activities taking place at the international, regional and national levels with the support of members and partners of UN-Water. The website www.unwater.org provides additional information on activities of members and partners related to the Decade.

C. Promotional and educational materials and publications

74. The Department of Public Information and UN-Water produced a promotional booklet for the Decade which includes images, facts, figures and recommendations for action on a number of water-related themes. The booklet is available in English, French and Spanish.

75. WHO, on behalf of UN-Water, prepared an advocacy sourcebook for the "Water for Life" Decade, as a guide for local groups on how to raise awareness on water issues. It will be updated with other members and partners of UN-Water throughout the Decade.

76. A DVD was produced by the Department of Public Information and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs containing: the message of the Secretary-General for the Decade; an eight-minute video entitled "Water: the Drop of Life"; a children's video entitled "Splish and Splash", and the promotional booklet for the Decade.

77. Occurring almost simultaneously with the "Water for Life" Decade is the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005-2014. The synergy of these two initiatives creates a useful framework for strengthening and promoting education programmes and training projects designed to increase awareness and preparedness within schools, families and communities on water- and sanitation-related issues.

78. UNICEF has developed interactive learning resources for young people on water, environment and sanitation. These include a computer game of strategy and survival entitled "Water Alert!", which includes a facilitator's guide and instructions for use in developing countries, and a user-friendly text module with an online discussion board. These resources, in English, French and Spanish, are available online and on CD at UNICEF Voices of Youth (www.unicef.org/voy).

79. As noted above, the second edition of the World Water Development Report, prepared by the UN-Water World Water Assessment Programme, was issued in March 2006 and the third edition in March 2009, as a major focus of the Decade's public information activities. Subsequent editions will be issued every three years throughout the Decade. The African Water Development Report is a regional report similar to the World Water Development Report. Subsidiary reports at the subregional and national levels have also been developed as stand-alone products designed to provide up-to-date information and monitoring tools.

80. In 2006, the UNICEF-WHO Joint Monitoring Programme, operating under the umbrella of UN-Water, issued a report providing coverage for 2004 of estimates in respect of access to drinking water supply and sanitation as a baseline for the Decade. The Programme issued another report in 2008, and further reports to assess progress throughout the Decade in 2010. Additional reports are planned for release in 2012, 2014 and 2015.

81. The proceedings and framework for action resulting from a round table on water, sanitation and hygiene education for schools, held in Oxford, United Kingdom, in January 2005, set out actions that must be taken to ensure that by 2015, the end of the "Water for Life" Decade, all schools receive a basic quality package of water, sanitation and hygiene education. The programme was sponsored by UNICEF and the International Water and Sanitation Centre, with the support of Oxfam Great Britain and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council.

82. UNEP has a wide range of information products that are relevant to the observance of the "Water for Life" Decade, including the *Atlas of International Freshwater Agreements*,[14] Vital Water Graphics and a diverse portfolio on coral reefs. (Relevant websites in this regard include www.unep.org, www.gpa.unep.org, www.unep.org/dewa/water and www.unep.org/regionalseas.)

VIII. Partnership initiatives

A. Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council

83. The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council, a multi-stakeholder organization dedicated to enhancing collaboration in the water-supply and sanitation sector, works in close cooperation with the United Nations system, including WHO, UNICEF, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), UNEP and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (see www.wsscc.org). The Council's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All programme was recognized by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its thirteenth session as an initiative that should be supported in its efforts to assist countries in their pursuit of the international development goals on water and sanitation. The partnership, which involves national and regional activities in over 35 developing countries, aims to establish national coalitions and mobilize political support and action around the world centred on the importance of sanitation, hygiene and water in achieving those goals and in reducing poverty during the "Water for Life" Decade.

[14] Nairobi, 2002.

B. Global Water Partnership

84. The Global Water Partnership is a working partnership among all those involved in water management: government agencies, private companies, professional organizations, multilateral development agencies, and other entities committed to meeting international goals related to water and sanitation. This network supports the idea that the goals of the "Water for Life" Decade can be reached only if there is collective awareness-raising on the key role of water in achieving sustainable development. The particular contribution that the Partnership makes to the Decade is its work within countries, and with the community of international organizations, aimed at assisting countries in developing integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2015, a goal set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

85. To assist in this effort, the Partnership, together with the Netherlands Water Partnership, has developed the "Toolbox on integrated water resources management" to provide water-management professionals with clear examples of good and bad practices and lessons learned from real-life implementation experiences. The toolbox provides a range of tools which users can select and modify according to their needs and local circumstances.

C. Ramsar Convention

86. The Ramsar Convention secretariat has been highly supportive of the "Water for Life" Decade. In 2005, on the occasion of World Wetlands Day (2 February), the Ramsar Convention secretariat invited representatives of the main environmental and aid agencies in Geneva to a debate on the theme "Natural mitigation of natural disasters". While the main focus of the event was the Indian Ocean tsunami, the debate also covered broader issues, including many related to the objectives of the "Water for Life" Decade.

87. The ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention was held in November 2005 in Kampala. The theme for 2005 was "Wetlands and water: supporting life, sustaining livelihoods". The issue of poverty alleviation was also the theme of World Wetlands Day 2006, on which occasion the messages of the Decade were further promoted.

D. Gender and Water Alliance

88. The Gender and Water Alliance, a network of over 300 organizations and individuals around the world, offers a mix of information- and knowledge-sharing initiatives, encompassing, inter alia, electronic conferencing, a website, advocacy leaflets and videos, and capacity-building and pilot programmes (see www.genderandwater.org). For the "Water for Life" Decade, the Alliance is working with partners such as UNDP, UN-Habitat and Cap-Net to develop gender strategies in the water sector and to provide training and materials to water managers on the importance of involving both women and men in the sustainable management of water and sanitation. The Alliance showcased these materials at the Fourth World Water Forum in Mexico City in March 2006, and at other events. In addition, the Alliance had cooperated with UN-Water in Africa in organizing a seminar on gender

and water resources management, held in Pretoria in March 2005, where an action plan on gender and water resources management in Africa was drawn up. The plan was endorsed by the African Ministerial Council on Water and will be implemented with all major stakeholders, including the African Water Facility, hosted by the African Development Bank.

E. Fourth World Water Forum, Mexico City, 2006, and Fifth World Water Forum, Istanbul, 2009

89. The World Water Forum and Ministerial Conference are initiatives of the World Water Council and host Governments, that are aimed at raising awareness and promoting active stakeholder discussions on water issues all over the world. As a major international event on water, the Forum seeks to enable multi-stakeholder participation and dialogue with a view to influencing water policymaking at the global and national levels, improving living standards for people all over the world and promoting more responsible water resources use and management in line with the pursuit of sustainable development.

90. The Fourth World Water Forum focused on good practices and concrete field actions in five key themes under the conference slogan "Local actions for global challenges".

91. In cooperation with the Fourth World Water Forum and the Japan Water Forum, UNICEF organized the second Children's World Water Forum as a parallel event. The focus of the event was on highlighting intergenerational cooperation, including strengthening dialogue between policymakers and the children of the world.

92. The Fifth World Water Forum focused on the overarching theme of "Bridging divides for water", which referred not just to the geographical crossroads between Europe and Asia, the Middle East and Africa, and the North and the South, but also to the barriers erected between modern-age and traditional water cultures and uses, between rich and poor, and between developed and developing regions of the world.

93. Through its consideration of the theme, the Forum emphasized the need for greater interaction, communication and functional harmonization among the various entities involved in or affected by water management. It also sent out a message to the water community that water is not an end in itself, but rather a basis of our development and well-being. Interaction with other sectors is therefore needed to understand how water can contribute to the solution of common problems faced by all affected sectors. This was also the message of the UN-Water third World Water Development Report, *Water in a Changing World*, which was launched at the Forum.

F. International Water Management Institute

94. The International Water Management Institute, based in Sri Lanka, implements research studies focusing on analysis of the trade-offs among water development, water management and the environment. Its new thematic structure covers water basin management; land, water and livelihoods; agriculture, water and cities; and water management and environment.

95. The Institute contributed to the Copenhagen Consensus Center project on development by submitting proposals highlighting the lack of access by the rural poor to safe and affordable domestic water supply and sanitation and water for productive purposes. The three investment proposals presented were ranked among the best and perceived as likely to be highly cost-effective (see http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com/).

96. In 2007, the Institute published the book *Water for Food, Water for Life: A Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture*,[15] which was the product of a broad partnership of practitioners, researchers and policymakers.

G. Other important partnership activities

97. The Government of Japan hosted the Follow-up Conference of the International Year of Sanitation in Tokyo on 26 and 27 January 2010. The Conference stressed that the Millennium Development Goal target on sanitation is currently not on track to be met by 2015. The chair's summary proposed the adoption of an international five-year plan for sustainable sanitation entitled "Sustainable Sanitation: the 5-Year Drive to 2015" to foster clear leadership and responsibility for sanitation; raise awareness of policymakers on possible costs of inaction and mobilize targeted investment towards sanitation; trigger effective behavioural change on hygiene, with a special focus on school sanitation; and promote productive sanitation systems based, inter alia, on reuse for fertilization and energy generation.

98. Sanitation and Water for All is a global partnership of developing countries, donors, multilateral organizations, civil society and other development partners whose aim is to achieve universal and sustainable access to sanitation and drinking water, with an immediate focus on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the most off-track countries. To achieve this, Sanitation and Water for All aims to increase political prioritization for sustainable sanitation and drinking water; support strong national planning, investment and accountability frameworks; improve targeting and impact of resources; support effective decision-making; and strengthen mutual accountability of Governments and development partners.

99. A large number of non-governmental organizations, as well as research institutes and other entities dealing with water issues, have indicated interest in preparing and organizing activities related to the International "Water for Life" Decade and in using its logo. It is expected that a strong network of interested parties will be established for the purpose of engaging in the activities related to the Decade.

IX. Conclusions and recommendations

100. Further mobilization of resources for the implementation of actions will be needed for the second half of the Decade, with the active involvement of all stakeholders, such as Governments, and including both traditional and emerging donors, non-governmental organizations and private foundations.

[15] London, Earthscan, 2007.

101. To accelerate progress towards meeting the sanitation and drinking water Millennium Development Goal target, developing countries and external support organizations need to demonstrate greater political commitment to sanitation- and drinking water-related goals, and consider how to better target resources, as well as strengthen national and subnational systems with respect to planning, implementing and monitoring the delivery of services, especially to unserved populations.

102. All stakeholders need to work in partnership to support the development and implementation of national plans for sanitation and drinking water, using their particular skills and resources, while aligning with national systems.

103. Member States may wish to consider setting up national mechanisms or designating country focal points to facilitate and achieve results related to the second half of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015.

104. If the goals of the "Water for Life" Decade are to be achieved in Africa, and words on gender are to be translated into action, then, during the second half of the Decade, special focus needs to be placed on the region's water development and management.

105. For the remainder of the Decade, UN-Water will continue to facilitate the coordinated system-wide response of the United Nations system necessary for the implementation of activities in support of the "Water for Life" Decade, giving equal consideration to water and sanitation.

106. Member States, national and international organizations, major groups and the private sector are urged to make increased voluntary contributions to the multi-donor trust fund and programmes of UN-Water for the second half of the Decade.

107. Interested stakeholders, including international and regional organizations and non-governmental organizations, are encouraged to link their water-related activities to those of the second half of the "Water for Life" Decade and to consider new partnerships and engagement with UN-Water and its members.